



messing about in **BOATS**

Volume 35 – Number 9

January 2018

Special Features This Issue
APBY 25th Annual Cat Gathering
TX200 Better Late Than Not at All
Airborne Ho! – Buffalo Maritime Center
The Gougeon Brothers, Gentlemanly Indomitability
The Butterfly – What's Wrong With Me?



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Commentary...

Bob Hicks, Editor

Winter is here and for me, at least, it means getting back into my shop with its waiting list of projects ignored all summer long whilst indulging in outdoor fun. I find I am ready by fall every year for winter's onset, no yearning whatever for going south. Just as well, as I cannot go anyway, what with this monthly publication schedule. I like the seasonal changes and as fall departs my shop in the barn once again beckons with its wood stove chuckling in the corner and my projects cluttering it up while outside the winter winds blow and the snow flies.

Yep, clutter and I are good old buddies, and a couple of recent visits to nicely cluttered shops nearby stirred this seasonal yearning to get back into my own shop. Within the past month or so I visited Pert Lowells' in Newbury and the "other" Lowell's Boat Shop in Amesbury, both reconfirming my view of them as "appropriately cluttered" and "comfortable" for small boat building.

So, what's on tap here for this winter? Well, last winter I had never completed my modifications to my 14' Wilderness Systems "Tsunami" kayak to fit it with the amas I had acquired from a Hobie Adventure trimaran, along with the attendant mast, boom and sail, for my very own, at last, trimaran. And my intention of re-covering my 1987-built 10' plywood "Cockleshell" with a layer of glass and epoxy to rehab the hull for local explorations on small streams and creeks and marshes where the 14-footer is just too long to maneuver never happened either.

Why not? Well, in the latter case plans for using it in 2017 on my weekly paddles with friend Charlie failed to materialize what with Charlie having a bad year dealing with his disability. Instead our attention over last winter turned to designing and building a four-wheel-drive off-road wheelchair for him from castoff electric wheelchair components and much welding of old bedrails, etc. It turned out well and we spent our summer adventuring outdoors exploring trails in several forest preserves rather than on our usual rivers, I riding my recumbent trike.

But now in early December it was time again to decide on what project(s)

I'd focus on and as I was wrapping up this January issue a whole new potential project arose when I read about the following opportunity in Steve Lapey's Norumbega Chapter WCHA newsletter:

"16' Old Town Double Ended Rowboat: As this unusual rowboat is equipped with sponsors, it would make a very stable rowing boat. It needs a full restoration as it had been barn stored for most of the past 50 years." For only \$150 it might be worth a shot.

Why this? Well about 25 or so years ago I restored one of these Old Town Rowboats, my first, and to date, only venture into canoe construction. It turned out very well and was a joy to row. Jane and I still recall with pleasure the exciting day now so long ago when, while participating in a TSCA gathering, we rowed the Old Town back to Christmas Cove in Maine from Pemaquid Point several miles into a steep chop arising from the usual downeast afternoon sou'wester. The boat tracked beautifully and we stayed dry, whilst others along fared far worse in a variety of traditional small boats.

Nah, better not even ask if it's still available. Aside from the aforementioned boat projects I have several non-boating projects awaiting attention, an electric assist e-trike with Charlie and a 1968 vintage motorcycle restoration project. Enough I say.

Still it beckons, it's always more appealing to begin a new project than it is to complete a partly finished one. There's plenty of room in my barn and sheds for inactive projects to await their turns front and center, and the attached greenhouse (now inactive) I built on the south side of my barn around 1980, which opens directly into my shop through a set of old French Doors, is a wonderful winter place for painting or gluing, it'll get up to 80° on a sunny 20° winter day.

Yet on the other hand, I no longer have the energy level displayed by Dan Rogers or Dave Lucas and his crew, my useful working day runs out after about 10-12 hours, no more 16 hour sessions to get things done. So, as I write this I ponder whether or not to make a move on this Old Town. Should it be a reach too far I could always burn it up in the wood stove I suppose. I'll let you know next month how it turns out.

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On the Cover...

Tony Davis' Arey's Pond Boatyard Annual Cat Gathering was a special occasion this past summer as it celebrated 25 years of bringing together Cape Cod catboats for a weekend of sailing fun and competition on beautiful Pleasant Bay while raising funds for the support of the Friends of Pleasant Bay in their ongoing efforts at preserving the environmental attractions of the popular bay. A fleet of 80 mostly cats gathered to celebrate and we have Tony's report featured in this issue on pages 6 and 7.

E-class Ice Yacht



Small Craft Illustration #4 by Irwin Schuster

irwinschuster@verizon.net



You write to us about...

Activities & Experiences...

Retired from *Good Old Boat*

We had a rough 2016 at *Good Old Boat* due to computer frustrations. Think upgrades, breakdowns, compatibility issues. It was time to make major lifestyle changes when Jerry stated, "If I didn't own this company, I'd quit." So we did. We retired in late March 2017 and passed the helm to three very capable and (this is the essential part) younger staff members. They bring new passion and enthusiasm to the magazine and they haven't yet been worn down by the Whack-A-Mole problems a company that depends on computers will experience.

Right after retiring we towed *Sunflower* (our trailerable sailboat) to Florida for the month of April. We had, as yet, no idea that Jerry couldn't handle the unseasonable heat because he was a heart attack waiting to happen. Once home again, we learned he'd been operating on borrowed time and he went in for open heart surgery (quadruple bypass) after Memorial Day.

Two months of recovery time passed before we could get to *Mystic*, the boat we love like a member of the family. How we had missed her! We made up for lost time by spending as much of the remaining summer as possible aboard. Lake Superior summers have a way of ending quickly. It was soon time to haul out and cover her for the winter.

Karen Larson and Jerry Powlas, Maple Grove, MN

Information of Interest...

Rescue Off An Unseaworthy Vessel

A Coast Guard Station Sandy Hook heavy weather boat crew rescued four men who were stranded aboard a 22' vessel near Keansburg, New Jersey. The boat crew arrived on the scene and rescued the four boaters off the unseaworthy vessel. The on scene weather was 30 knot winds and 3' to 5' sea state. "This type of boat was designed to be operated on lakes, not the ocean," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Jennifer Smith, a crewmember at Station Sandy Hook.

USCG Publicity Release



Horsepower vs Thrust

One of the comments lately was an inquiry for how to compare the thrust rating of motors with different fuels. It's a somewhat complicated calculation that depends on the speed of the vessel. However, as an attempt to answer the question posed in the comment, "How does a 5hp gas engine compare in thrust to a 55lb trolling motor," the 5hp engine pushing the boat at 5 knots would be producing a thrust of approximately 170lbs. As the boat is held back by wind or current to a lower speed through the water that thrust force would increase. Therefore, if the person making the inquiry is using full throttle occasionally to move the boat a trolling motor is not likely to be a satisfactory substitute.

Dave Laux, retired boat designer/builder

Eco-Safe Wood Treatment

Eco-Safe Wood Treatment is a product that I discovered by accident just poking around the internet looking for a "green" alternative to glycol (antifreeze) as a wood preservative. This comes in a small pouch, filled with enough powder to make 4.5 gallons, or one imperial gallon. It will "age" wood to that silver gray patina that you see on the sides of those shake shingle houses.

It is a preservative and protectant. It is non toxic, VOC free and eco friendly. It is used on decks, siding, gazebos, docks, log homes and almost anywhere one wants to preserve and protect wood. It will change the color of the wood. It will protect against rot, moss and mold. It needs only one treatment, no reapplication necessary. It penetrates the wood and bonds permanently. It won't flake or peel and doesn't need scraping. No special surface prep on raw wood and no fumes. It is kid, pet, livestock safe. It can be applied with a brush, sprayer, sponge or dipped. This proprietary product is mixed with plain water.

I have yet to try it but all the reviews I've read have been very positive and I will report my personal findings after I test it over the winter to see what happens. This seems to be expensive at \$19 per pack, but it makes close to a gallon of preservative and offers "a lifetime of protection with one application," so maybe it really isn't that expensive compared with what is currently available that is not so green. There is also an insect preservative preventative available, too. This product is made in Canada, not AlmostCanada. They can be contacted on the web at TallEarth.com or (855) 561-4181.

Greg Grundtisch, Lancaster, NY

Opinions...

No, not *Moonwind*!

We, all of us, have to lose our loved ones sooner or later. Some are loved more than others. Matthew Goldman's *Moonwind* has obviously shared much more than an owner's affection, she has been boon companion. I have had to give up more than one vessel under similar circumstances. When these girls transition from "the boat" to a member of the family, often the only family we have, their

passing leaves an indelible mark. Mathew, I am so sorry for your loss, when even the thought of giving her up is a loss too much.

Dan Rogers, *Miss Kathleen* and Her Court, AlmostCanada

Projects...

Norumbega WCHA Chapter News

Our Chapter project is moving along on schedule. The hull came off the form and it is starting to look like a real canoe! John Fiske, John Fitzgerald and Steve Hodge were here at the canoe shop for the event and, as the building form has been returned to storage, there will be no more heavy lifting on this project. At the next scheduled shop sessions we will bang in some tacks as we finish up the planking to the sheer line, install the cant ribs, nail the planks to the stems and trim the rib tips along the inwales.

Our new Prospector now has a coat of varnish on the interior and it will be ready to be canvassed in early December.

Steve Lapey, Groveland, MA



News From The Beetle Boat Shop

Another sailing season comes to an end and for many way too quickly. With Category 5 hurricanes lined up in the Atlantic, many opted for us to haul their boats sooner than usual. Luckily Hurricane Jose stayed offshore far enough to avoid any major damage to the fleet.

The Beetle crew used the slower summer months for doing the annual maintenance on the shop buildings. This turned

out to be a new roof and metal siding on the main boat shop building and a new roof and wood siding on the front office building. In addition, all the trim was sanded, primed and painted to develop a new green, brown and tan color scheme and, of course, a new Beetle Cat sign on the front lawn. In addition to exterior improvements a few interior improvements in the way of restored antique office furniture were added as well.

The shop is currently busy making Beetle Cat parts in preparation for new boats and repairs this winter. This involves first bringing in 2" white oak and making keels, taking into consideration the grain of the wood, knots, checks, etc, something that is learned after years of working with the wood and knowing how it bends. The cutoffs are then used to make the other oak parts in the boat (skegs, sternposts, stems, mast steps, bridges). The Atlantic white cedar is next, making the full length planks, natural cedar cockpits, and the remainder used for decking material. Finally the pine is brought in for the floor timbers and deck structure and building is ready to begin.

Michelle Buoniconto, Beetle, Inc., Wareham, MA.



New Beetle Sign

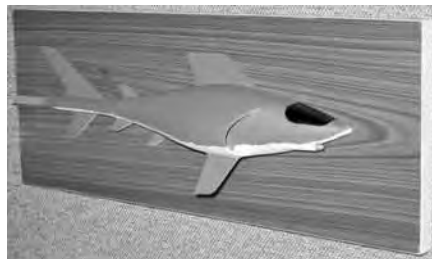


Exterior Shop Improvements

A 3D Joke

This is meant to be a 3D joke. It is confusing I hope, because it seems logical. You can almost accept it in passing, then pause and think, "What was that I just saw?" I really like this. Momma Nature shows us how things ought to be. It is quite striking hanging on the wall. The gill intakes and torpedo tusks look natural. It's high density architectural foam with a sheet plastic center plate and angled fins. Couple of days spread over a week and it's out of my system.

Irwin Schuster, Tampa, FL



This Magazine...

A Correction from Reinhard

Thanks for including two of my most recent articles in your December issue of *MAIB*. Both look great, and all pictures are in the right places and with the correct captions. Good job!

I have but one question about one sentence in my Cornish Pilot Gig article: How did my sentence: "They were rowed by six oarsmen, each sitting slightly off center, jerking massive oars through the water, while a coxswain steered the boat out towards big incoming windjammers or freighters in need of a pilot, who was sitting in the very bow of the gig."

Turn into: "They were rowed by six oarsmen, each sitting slightly off center, pulling massive oars through the water, **while a coxswain who was sitting in the very bow of the gig** steered the boat out towards big incoming windjammers or freighters in need of a pilot."

The coxswain was of course sitting in the stern of the boat steering, jerking the starboard and port ropes attached to the stern rudder. (Where was the pilot sitting in your sentence?).

It was the "pilot, who was sitting in the very bow of the gig", as my sentence states, not the coxswain. The pilot would eventually leave the gig, climbing from his bow seat in the gig up the Jacob's ladder of the incoming ship. He is a passenger on the way out.

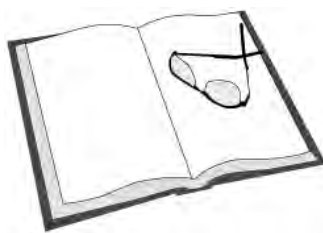
Please correct this for the readers in a note. Thanks, Reinhard Zollitsch, Orono, ME



The White Fleet was made up of sailing and motorized fishing vessels from Portugal that used single man dories to fish for cod on the Grand Banks off Newfoundland and the Little Hellefiske, Godthaab, Fyllas and Danas Banks off Greenland. The fleet ships earned this nickname during World War II, during which Portugal remained neutral but required that all the ships in its North Atlantic fishing fleet paint their hulls white and display their names, the Portuguese flag and the word PORTUGAL in large letters on both their port and starboard sides.

Despite this effort, two of the fleet's vessels, the *Maria da Gloria* and the *Delaes*, were sunk by German U boats soon after the US entered the war in 1941. Once the hostilities ended the fleet continued to display their wartime paint and markings and continued their fishing activities until the early 1970s. By that time, however, technological advancements had displaced traditional ways of catching fish, many new trawlers had joined the fleet and the end of the White Fleet was in sight.

Today only four White Fleet vessels survive. Three of these are steel hulled sister ships, the *Argus*, the *Creoula* and the *Santa Maria Manuela*. The fourth is *Gazela*, a wooden hulled barkentine that was built in 1901 and is now owned by the Philadelphia Ship Preservation Guild. This non profit orga-



Book Review

The White Fleet A History of The Portuguese Handliners

By Jean-Pierre Andrieux
Flanker Press, St John's, Newfoundland
www.flankerpress.com
info@flankerpress.com

Reviewed by Jim Parmentier

America. One other contemporary fleet ship, a hospital/assistance vessel that supported the Portuguese fishing industry at sea until 1969, has been turned into a floating museum in the Portuguese town of Viana do Castelo.

For readers interested in the historical design and operation of wooden ships, *The White Fleet* is well worth having for its photographs alone. These photographs, primarily derived from the author's personal collection, fill almost 275 of the book's 350 pages. In the remaining 75 pages Mr Andrieux provides a brief history of the 500-year-old Portuguese codfishing industry and describes the activities of daily life onboard these sailing vessels in the early 20th century.

There are brief chapters on the medical assistance provided by the Portuguese government after the 1920s and comments about the effects of hurricanes and the competition encountered by ships from other nations after WW II ended. The seventh chapter explains the history and fates of the four remaining vessels and the last chapter tells us where we can find bacahau (codfish) and other maritime tourist attractions when we visit Portugal today.

But what makes this book memorable are the pages and pages of black and white photographs of vessels and men who annually made a 4,000-mile voyage under sail or power to bring Newfoundland cod to southern Europe.

nization operates *Gazela* and enables her to participate in tall ships events here in North



APBY 25th Annual Cat Gathering

By Tony Davis
Photos by Anita Winstanley Roark

There was a lot of anticipation leading up to Arey's Pond Boat Yard's 2017 Annual Cat Gathering. It was to be a special occasion in celebration of 25 years of setting aside one summer day for gaff rigged sailboats to form a procession across Pleasant Bay. A three day event was planned. Included in the entry fee was a warm up race on Friday, August 18, a commemorative 25th Pennant for the race on Saturday, August 19 and a send off on Sunday, August 20 for those who had sailed into Arey's Pond from distant ports.

On Friday morning there was a brisk southeast breeze for the warm up race. Twenty seven boats from all classes participated. The race went quickly and smoothly led by *Sea Lion*, a wooden Wianno senior in the traditional class, skippered by Peter McClennen, followed by Rick Cain in *Pleasant Dreams*, a Marshall 18 and the Browns sailing the new APBY design, *Caracal* 19, *An Cat Mathair*. The conditions were perfect and the top boats sailed the course, which normally averages an hour and a half, in less than an hour.

On Saturday it was a different story. The morning start had been scheduled to coincide with participants returning from Big Pleasant Bay through the Narrows at high tide. However, during the night a storm had dumped a record amount of rain, washing out roads and swamping many boats tied up at the dock and on moorings. The APBY crew came in early to clean up and bail and the committee made the difficult decision to delay the start by one hour to give sailors more time to prepare their boats. The gale that had been forecast was not happening and there was no longer any talk of reefing.

By the time the committee boat headed down the river there were 96 boats registered. It was an overcast day with light air from the south. There were no issues at the line and soon, with cannon shots for the three staggered starts, all the classes were underway. A parade of gaff rigged sailboats had set off across the bay towards the narrows.

As in other years, this gathering was family oriented in nature. One sailor from Vermont and his young son booked an APBY sailing school boat and drove down from Vermont for the weekend, as they had over many years, always with the intention of having fun no matter what the outcome. There were many others, including long time customers Mike Duggan and John and Mary Kelsey, who had participated in just about every Cat Gathering. And so it seemed that all of these loyal participants were about to enjoy another typical Cat Gathering, but it was not quite to be.

All the boats made it from Little Pleasant Bay through the Narrows and headed to mark A off the Wequassett Inn. Some of the lighter boats in the 14' class were catching up to the heavier boats from the previous two starts, so mark A became a traffic jam as the wind lightened, however, in time, the fleet started to spread out and began to head for mark B.

As the wind was dying in Big Pleasant Bay, *Pandora*, one of the fastest catboats in the world, skippered by Burt and Drew Staniar, crossed the finish line first at 1.25 hours, followed by Bruce Almeida in *Harvest Moon*. Many of the Marshall 15s and APBY Lynxes also made it across the finish line.

And then the biggest fear that Cat Gathering organizers had labored under during its 25-year history began to unfold. Because of the delayed start, the tide was now turning against the fleet an hour earlier in the race than usual. So as the wind diminished and the tide turned, there were more than 60 boats becalmed in Big Pleasant Bay and, if the wind did not pick up, the finish line would have to be moved to them.

At about the 1.5-hour mark, as the 14s were approaching the narrows, the strongest current was beginning to push against them and the wind completely died. The committee hoped that they would drop their anchors and wait for wind but instead they were starting to drift backwards. So the committee called the finish line for the 14's at the Narrows. Thanks to communication from APBY staff in the patrol boat there was reasonably controlled chaos calling off the finish times aboard Ben Zender's *Daisy*, which served as this year's committee boat.

Participants still in Big Pleasant Bay radioed the committee by VHF reporting that it looked like a breeze would come up shortly. On the committee boat there was worry about the events planned ashore and the desire to get all the sailors in, but after 20 minutes the wind did pick up out of the southeast and sailors who had been patient enough to wait made it to the finish line under sail.

Ashore at the boatyard, there was a celebratory evening of music, awards and catered cocktail and dinner hours. Musical entertainment for the cocktail hour was provided by the Bert Jackson Quartet, joined on bass by customer Rick Cain who won the M-18 class. The Vern-Mon Band played during the dinner hour. Food was provided by White's Catering (Orleans, Massachusetts) and wine was generously donated by Vintages Adventures in Wine (Concord, Massachusetts).

Awards, featuring an image by artist Karol B. Wyckoff, were presented and stories were told of Cat Gatherings over the past 25 years, such as the year *Bull* and *Bear* from Barneget Bay participated and led a great fundraising event for FOPB and local non profit sailing programs. As darkness came and the catboats rested on the docks and moorings, the fire pit was lit and the party went on well into the evening.



Sunday was a beautiful breezy day for the morning sendoff for the Catboat owners who had taken the time to sail from ports outside of Pleasant Bay to attend the weekend event. Marshall 22's had sailed from Padanarum, Martha's Vineyard, and Stage Harbor. As the visitors approached the Narrows many Pleasant Bay Catboat owners came out to show their appreciation and joined in a sail through the channel. The Arey's Pond crew shot the cannon to bid the guests goodbye and wished them safe passage.

The central purpose of this year's event, as it has been since the first Cat Gathering in 1992, was to honor the bay, its beauty and the FOPB volunteers who oversee its health, ensuring that the natural habitat is preserved as much as possible in this ever changing world. As the organizers try to emphasize each year, all who participate are winners. As a group of sailors, Cat Gathering participants had Pleasant Bay to themselves for a few hours and celebrated the Bay's beauty with their wind powered vessels, leaving no trace.

The Arey's Pond Boat Yard crew is thankful to all who participated and hopes that the annual gathering will continue into the future.

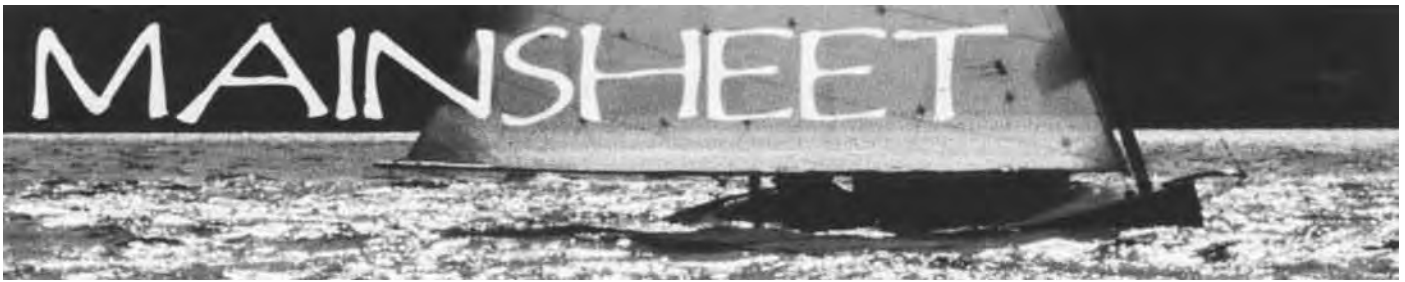


Friends of Pleasant Bay

The Friends of Pleasant Bay is a grass-roots environmental group dedicated to the preservation of one of Cape Cod's most stunning recreational and ecological resources. Since its founding in 1985, the group has been successful in achieving state designation of the Bay as an area of critical environmental concern, and was instrumental in development and state approval of a resource management plan for the Bay.

P.O. Box 1243 Harwich, MA 02645
mailto:info@friendsofpleasantbay.org





Selections from the *Mainsheet*, Newsletter of the Delaware River Chapter TSCA

Mid Atlantic Small Craft Festival 2017

Photographs by Kevin Brennan, Doug Oeller, Bruce Robbins, Frank Stauss, Ken Tweed and Carl Weissinger.

Warm weather, good wind, bright sunshine, crabs, beer, fried chicken, music, song, races, laid back sailing, beautiful boats, jokes, laughter and good friends. All of these describe the 2017 version of the MASCF held in St Michaels, Maryland. Hollywood script writers could not have done a better job with this year's event. In the recent past, participants in this gathering have braved bad weather. This year was our reward. Mother Nature outdid herself. Take a look at these photographs and see if you don't agree.



Thoughts from Our President

By Carol Jones

I had been planning all along to go to St Michaels this year, but the Thursday before the magical weekend found me driving Bill's truck down to the Florida Keys where he had been working on repairing hurricane damage at his brothers' house on Big Pine Key. The friend with whom he had traveled down had to leave and Bill needed to stay on for at least another week so I missed what sounds like the best MASCF ever. Next year it's St Michael's OR BUST!

The damage and destruction in the Keys was heart breaking, debris piled up to the sky all the way down Route 1, aid workers everywhere, utility company trucks, dump trucks, cranes and bucket trucks, wrecked trailers and boats and appliances and roofs and waterlogged furniture as far as the eye could see. We're lucky to live in a relatively benign area where natural disasters are few and we can spend hurricane season securing our boats when necessary but enjoying them most of the time.

As the weather grows colder and the days shorter, we'll have fun at our meetings with speakers and shared stories and the laughter we're all so good at. It's always a good and informative time when we meet.

Gentle Sail

Painted by Mike Wick





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It's Monday afternoon, the day the Texas 200 officially starts, when I decide that I can go after all. The Traditional Way boats will have left Port Mansfield early this morning. By this time they are either at or approaching Camp One in the Land Cut. The Hard Way boats sailed out of Magnolia Beach yesterday to what they are calling Camp Zero at Pass Cavallo. They should be at Hidden Pass, their Camp One, by now.

A family medical emergency on Friday afternoon had kept me from my planned 3am Saturday departure. I've missed the nephews' Texas Water Safari start and it's too late for the planned furniture delivery to a couple of nieces in South Texas, but I figure that if I can get to Magnolia Beach tonight I can still sail out tomorrow morning, just two days after the rest of the Hard Way boats. Maybe, just maybe, I can catch them before they meet up with the rest of the Texas 200 fleet on Wednesday and head back north on Thursday morning.

I throw everything into *Gamaray*, my Michalak Mayfly 14, and pull out of the driveway at 3pm. With only one stop along the way for gas we're alongside the ramp at Magnolia Beach Park by 7:30pm. It's a little over an hour until dark. I rig the Mayfly and get her in the water, then pull her over to the side, still inside the breakwater, onto a small area of sand. This leaves the ramp accessible just in case any fishermen show up in the morning before I get going. This is unlikely. I plan on a pre dawn departure.

No time to set up the tent. I yank the mosquito net out of its bin in the boat's aft storage compartment and drape it over the open window of the truck, which is sideways to the prevailing winds for good airflow across the drivers' seat. Then, in a rare moment of actually thinking ahead, I pull out the galley box and set up the alcohol stove on the tailgate of the truck. If I make coffee tonight then tomorrow morning the thermos will have already been filled. This, I think, will save me some prep time before heading out. Except that, in my haste to depart Beaumont this afternoon, I have forgotten the bag of Gevalia Columbia medium roast coffee that was sitting on the counter in the kitchen, right next to the paper filters.

I look at my watch. It's a quarter 'til 9. I can't remember how late the JT One Stop stays open during the week so I frantically unhitch the trailer, throw the stove and mosquito net onto it and take off toward the only store in Magnolia Beach. If they're closed, Port Lavaca is 10 or 15 miles up the road. They have a 24 hour WalMart. There is no way in hell I am doing this trip without coffee.

The lights inside the store are still on as I screech into the parking lot. I get out of the

Better Late Than Not At All

or

Doing the Texas 200 The Really Hard Way

By Chuck Pierce

truck, go in and find the coffee shelf. The old adage about beggars and choosers comes to mind. I shrug and grab the next to last big red container of Folgers which seems to be the only coffee available. The part of the shelf labeled "Coffee Filters" is empty. The clerk notices what I'm looking at and says, "Sorry, we are out of coffee filters. You can use paper towels, we have those." I think I saw the gold coffee filter in the galley box. Or did I? I grab a roll just in case. As I check out I am happier than I probably look.

Back at the ramp I set everything up again and make coffee for tomorrow, then repack the galley box. After a Clif Bar and a beer, I put the driver's side seat all the way back. Sleep comes quickly.

I'm awake at 4am, wound up in anticipation of a few days on the water, going back to sleep is not an option. After making sure that everything that needs to be on the boat is out of the truck, I hitch the trailer back up and head to the parking that the generous folks at the JT One Stop are providing for us yet again this year. It's my last chance to go for a run this week, so after I lock the truck, I make the most of the mile or so to the ramp through dark, quiet streets. In just a few minutes, I'm back at the boat. My boat clothes are waiting. After I change, I get the sail up and put the cockpit in order, then take a break for coffee and a Clif Bar. As soon as I finish, about 5:40am, I shove off with one reef in the sail.

This early in the day the winds are moderate and out of the south, but as usual down here they build steadily after the sun comes up. Before long I have to stop for a moment and put the second reef in. The waves on Matagorda Bay are 3' high and the bailing keeps me constantly busy. I am finding that I can't sail using my normal upwind tacking angles in these waves. One moment we're sailing along and the next a larger than usual wave breaks over the bow and the boat shudders to a halt. I start bearing off a bit and am rewarded with enough speed to punch through even the larger waves.

It's a wet ride this morning. The sun is mostly behind clouds and with both the air and water temps down here a good 10° below what is normal for June (think mid 80's rather

than mid 90's), my fast drying boat clothes are making me chilly in the rising winds. A few hours into the sail I start shivering. I stop the boat long enough to retrieve my rain jacket from the rear compartment. This keeps the wind off me and I warm up quickly. I wear it all day. We tack down Matagorda Bay into the wind for nine hours.

Things get interesting as we sail across the ICW at the end of the Port O'Connor jet-ties. Suddenly the waves are bigger although the period stays about the same. I'm starting to wonder if we'll make it through without capsizing when they suddenly get smaller and I know that we've made it to the other side of the ICW. We head for the entrance to Big Bayou, a small, twisting channel that will take us into Espiritu Santos Bay just north of Bayucos Island.

After turning into Big Bayou it all gets much easier. Once we hit the channel I run *Gamaray* up into some shallows on the windward side and take a break. After a quick lunch, lots of water, and some coffee, I'm good to go. We're still close hauled but we make Hidden Pass, the first camp, a few hours later having sailed the rest of the way on one tack.

Hidden Pass has changed since we were here last June. Then we had sailed through from south to north in a channel that was maybe 15' wide and 3' or 4' deep. Today there is no channel, just an expanse of crushed oyster shell that runs over where the channel used to be, broken only by the top 12" of the southernmost channel bulkhead. Things change quickly down here.

I get the tent set up and put on my camp clothes. It is good to be dry. After the rains this spring I expected the clouds of mosquitoes that we normally would have during such a wet year, but surprisingly there are just a few. The wind may have something to do with that. It has not died down this evening, in fact, I've had to rig a couple of tiedowns on the windward side of the tent to keep it from blowing over. Maybe the mosquitoes are all downwind, biding their time, waiting for calmer air. A quick supper and by dark I am inside the tent and asleep, safe from those small, winged bullies and their bloody desires.

I wake up at 5am. I've not had a lot of rest in the last four days so I turn over and go back to sleep. An hour and a half later I roll off the sleeping pad, change into my boat clothes (which are somewhat dryer after hanging all night in the tent) and make the day's coffee. I drink half and put the other half into the thermos for this afternoon. Breaking camp doesn't take long and by about 7:30am I am on the water, headed through First Chain of Islands across San Antonio Bay to Panther Point.

I've never seen a panther on the bar-

A lonely Mayfly at Hidden Pass.



rier islands but I suppose there had to have been at least one out there at some point in time. There are lots of interesting names on the chart, some dating back several centuries. It seems that every nook and cranny down here has a name with a story behind it: Rattlesnake Island, Blackjack Shore, Bray Cove, Bull Haul Shoreline, Jay Bird Point, Deadman Reef, Cow Chip Cove and Quarantine Shoreline represent just a few.

The southern part of San Antonio Bay is bounded in the northeast by First Chain of Islands and in the southwest by Second Chain of Islands. There are at least 17 named oyster reefs in the Bay, which is well respected among sailors of small boats not only for the plethora of reefs, but for the washing machine like chop that is present in winds above ten knots. By staying close to Matagorda Island we are able to stay in smoother water while at the same time steering clear of the reefs, which are mostly in the northern part of the Bay.

We make it past Panther Reef. It's not long before I turn the boat off the wind and we head for the entrance to Ayres Dugout. As we approach, I can see what looks like a catamaran mast with a float on it over in the area behind the channel. It looks like they are coming in from the south, maybe heading for the Dugout entrance on the other side of the island.

This is not the first time I've sailed through the Dugouts from north to south but in the past it's always been on winter trips with a north wind at my back. Today the wind is, as usual, from the south southeast. We're hard on the wind as we hit the channel entrance. The trees in front of the three fishing shacks on the island next to the channel are making the wind somewhat iffy but we are making way. Then a boat with a float on top of the mast crosses the channel in front of me with all sail down and goes softly onto the reef. It's a friend of mine and his son. They have drifted off the other side of the channel having missed the southwest entrance to the Dugout. As we hit the shore in front of one of the shacks, they are already out of the boat and pushing it off. I step ashore holding the bowline and ask if they need help.

They ask that I stand by for a minute, and so I do. They are well equipped for walking on oysters, with proper boots and gloves on. My friend explains that they are headed home, we talk for a couple of minutes, then they sail off headed back the way we came.

I shove *Gamaray* back into the channel and we creep southwest until the channel turns slightly to port. I pinch the boat up into the wind as far as she will go and still make any speed at all. And I make the same mistake that my friend had. Where the channel used to jog a bit to the south, there are now oysters. We run up on them, push off with an oar and, looking around, I see that the channel now runs straight out into Mesquite Bay. We are not the last boat this week to have this issue.

This confirms again that things are always changing here. It's easy to think of an oyster reef as a fixed object. The reality is that they die back and they grow, sometimes in new directions. GPS tracks from past passages through the back bays can be helpful, but there is no substitute for paying close attention to the water in front of me.

Channel markers, too, are always changing in the back bays. They are different virtually every time I've been through here. They get snapped off in storms and damaged when boats hit them. Repairs happen infrequently or not at all. It's a new challenge every time we sail back there.

We've had no further problems. Cedar Dugout and Carlos Dugout are to our stern. We sail between Spalding Reef and Poverty Reef, around the tip of Jay Bird Reef and head for Paul's Mott. When I see The Cross on the southwest side of the Mott, really just an old mast with spreaders attached, I head for it. We've used that site for memorial services and a wedding on past Texas 200s and it's a good place for a lunch break. As we get closer it becomes apparent that one of the spreaders is gone. The Cross is a cross no more. I pull up about 10' from it and look around.

The storms this past winter were not kind to Paul's Mott. The approaches, which used to be crushed oyster shell, are mud now. The Cross sits only 8' or 9' from the water, half the distance it was when I was here with some friends in December, and the concrete base at its bottom has about 6" inches exposed. The flat spots where we've pitched tents on past Texas 200s have been washed away, and all that is left are the shell berms that separate the bay from the marshes to the southeast. (Some friends visited the Mott this fall after Hurricane Harvey and reported that the flats have been somewhat restored, although the mast is gone.)

It's about an hour before sunset when I spot sailboat masts up ahead at Camp 3. We

have caught up with the fleet. I pull the boat up on the beach at the northern tip of Mud Island right at 8pm. After quickly setting up camp I have supper and chat with a few friends, then hit the sack at the end of a long but worthwhile day.

In the morning we head back downwind, and the next two days are easy, with moderate winds and less chop. There are other boats everywhere in sharp contrast to Tuesday's and Wednesday's solitude. We make both Army Hole (Camp 4) and Magnolia Beach (the finish) in the early afternoon, giving me lots of time for visiting and catching up with friends, some who I haven't seen since last years' event.

And that's what it is really about. I mean, there is an undeniable attraction to the challenge of the 200. Dropout rates have been as high as 50%, depending on how bad conditions are in a given year. The event has a well deserved reputation for carnage. But the big reason that so many of us do the Texas 200 year after year is the opportunity to sail with and learn from a bunch of like minded folks who include some of the finest people I've ever met. This is well worth some very challenging days on the water.

When I make it home on Saturday evening, I mark the dates for next year's Texas 200 on my calendar. Planning is underway.

A Note About the Hard Way

This year (2017) for the first time there were two completely different official Texas 200 routes to choose from. The traditional route ran from Port Mansfield to Magnolia Beach as it generally does. The new option was called the Hard Way and was meant to present a new set of challenges to veterans of the event. This route started in Magnolia Beach and required sailing upwind for the first three days, with the idea being meeting the fleet headed north from Port Mansfield at Camp 3 on Mud Island, then head back downwind with them to Camp 4 and the finish at Magnolia Beach.

(Chuck Pierce lives in Beaumont, Texas, with his wife Kathy and Stella, the 85lb half Lab/half Cur puppy also known as "Crazy Dog, Herder of Cattle Until They Get Too Close." She went sailing for the first time in August. She liked it.)

Mayfly headed downwind. (Noel Nichols Photo)



Beached at Paul's Mott.



Dedicated to the professional guides who take their clients on expeditions in the mountains and deserts and on lakes, rivers and oceans and who bring them safely back to civilization. I thank Andy Preto, Chris Rhodes and Terry Milner for their outstanding leadership on the demanding Alsek River Trip.

"Bears live up on the slopes of this ridge," Andy, the head guide, said. Our party of rafters had assembled at a campsite on Yukon's Dezadeash River, a calm, mild mannered stream. Downstream ahead was the raging Alsek River, born of a confluence of the Dezadeash and the Kaskawulsh Rivers, for a 160-mile, watery, 1800' drop romp through the Yukon, British Columbia, and Alaska. If our luck held, we would make this descent in 12 days. The route would pass through some of the most spectacular scenery on earth, mountains, lakes, glaciers, canyons, waterfalls and God knows what else in the Arctic wilderness.

It was July, 2016, as the 24-hour day sun bathed the forested hillside across the river in the late afternoon glow. Everything appeared in sharp detail but we saw no bears. Most of us had met as strangers the day before, a party of 18, three guides and 15 guests. We would work as a team, one for all, and all for one.

A man in his early 40s, head guide Andy is a true pioneer of the North, resolute, hard-working and determined to live off the land. Our party had visited his home earlier in the day in the village of Haines Junction where he raises turkeys for meat and goats for their milk as a part time business. An electrified fence protected his little farm against bears. Along with being a fisherman and a hunter, Andy moreover had his own trapline during the winter. Trappers were now becoming a dying breed due in part to cumbersome laws. Andy also taught school in the village. He had taken the responsibility of leading this expedition with but three days notice as Whitey, the guide originally slated to take this trip, had been forced abruptly to cancel upon the death of his aged mother in Toronto.

"An exceptional guide," Andy said without bragging, "is required for the Alsek, it's not for someone with average ability." Andy was the right man for the job, he had run the Alsek 13 times and the Tatshenshini, the chief tributary to the Alsek, 46 times. Furthermore, he exemplified the art of leadership.

In his late 20s, the second guide, Terry, originally from Ontario, had found his true calling in the Far North. In the guiding off season he taught special education classes in Whitehorse for kids with disabilities, counseling them to become good citizens. Like many guides, Terry loved to go on his own private personal trips. After this expedition he was headed to Big Salmon River for some fishing with friends. Always smiling and upbeat, Terry brought along his guitar for sing alongs at our dinners.

The third guide, Chris, was an old friend, one of my guides for the Firth River trip the year before. A graduate student at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, he set us at ease with his soft spoken manner. With ability and competence, he was ready to face any challenge. "We have Plan A, then Plan B and, if these fail, we can resort to Plan C, that is, C (see) what happens." An avid student of the North, Chris frequently contributed his knowledge on a variety of subjects to our group.

In short, all three guides, by necessity, were first rate rafters, chefs, campers and

Airborne Ho!

Rafting Yukon's Alsek River

With a Helicopter Portage Over Turnback Canyon

By Richard E. Winslow III

jacks of all trades, and presumably masters of them all.

I enjoyed meeting all the guests, lawyers, business people and professors, many of them husbands and wives and veterans of other Arctic trips. I often talked with Rick, a personal friend of John Wayne. "The Duke" should have been alive to make a movie in this magnificent setting. "I met John three or four times," Rick said. "He was then an old man. We attended golf country club horse shows and rodeos together."

Although they were not human, our three rafts were indispensable partners for this trip. They were all inflated and ready for launching. I had complete confidence in these sturdy craft. All had bright blue colored hulls with yellow lettering, "Canadian River Expeditions." I had previously ridden in them on the Firth River and on the South Nahanni River. Their tough rubber hides held up with no ripping or tearing from the rough river bottoms. For \$8000 apiece the money was well spent. On the contrary, a junk raft of mediocre manufacture, if damaged beyond repair, would have meant a long hike out in rough country or, failing that, a helicopter evacuation costing thousands of dollars.



Rafts become a second home in the North. Safer, sturdier and capable of carrying larger loads than canoes and kayaks, the raft is the superior and better suited craft for many expeditions.

A quick summary of the history of these rafting/canoeing/kayaking expeditions rivals a Wild West movie script. In 1961 Clem Rawert and John Dawson made the first recorded complete Alsek descent in a double Klepper Kayak, portaging across a glacier to avoid Turnback Canyon, to reach Dry Bay, Alaska. Other trips followed, all portaging around the Canyon.

In 1971 Walt Blackadar, in a single kayak, survived a tumultuous, almost death defying descent through Turnback Canyon. Blackadar's article in *Sports Illustrated* brought immediate fame and attention both to the Alsek River and to himself.



A kayak run almost too much for Superman. Since Walt Blackadar's first solo descent of Turnback Canyon in 1971, only a very few since then have emulated his daring feat.

The nearby Tatshenshini River, the major tributary of the Alsek, had been threatened as a wilderness preserve by corporate Canada, namely Geddes Resources Ltd of Toronto. This organization had planned to dig an open pit copper mine at Windy Craggy Peak, the value of the deposit estimated to be between \$8.5 to \$15 billion. If this project had ever materialized the pristine "Tat" (short for Tatshenshini) would have been severely compromised, even ruined. Ultimately in 1994 the entire Alsek-Tat area was named as a World Heritage Site, saving this beautiful area from exploitation. Outdoors people from around the world have reaped the benefits of the defeat of this proposed mine. Ho for clear water and clean air!

Let's go! In the bright sunshine the next morning we loaded up the gear and boarded the rafts, with two guests in front and two in back. In the middle, a guide took command with his oars. Heaped up, lashed down gear was crammed in every available space. We drank freely from our canteens and passed around bags of gorp (good old raisins and peanuts). During the first full day on the river we encountered easy flat water and occasional ripples. Upon spotting visible surface sandbars, the guides easily avoided them and swung wide back and forth without incident. But muddy water evilly concealed submerged sandbar lenses and rock gardens.

At one point I thought I heard a thunder-clap but this noise resounded when a raft had scraped the bottom. Terry's raft had become hung up on a boulder obstacle. With adjustments and some strenuous prying and pushing with his paddle, Terry finally freed the raft. "That's all right," Andy said to those in his raft. "This is Terry's first time on the Alsek. And every time he grounds, he learns what not to do and is correcting his strokes." Even Andy and Chris, veterans on the river, occasionally got stuck.

Alas, no dredge service is available on the Alsek. Submerged sandbars and rock piles in muddy water frequently result in "hang-up" groundings. These obstacles often shift with every ice out break up in the spring.



In the vicinity of Lava Creek we approached a low ridge with a talus slope of volcanic black rocks. We landed with difficulty. With no coves or inlets for an easy eddy out, fast runaway water complicated the attempt. With great skill the guide pulled hard to nose the raft toward the bank. With an otherwise inept effort the raft would have shot beyond the most desirable landing. Grabbing a rope line, the guide ran over the baggage and jumped out on the muddy ground, pulling the line taut. Once the boat was secure, we guests disembarked. This identical drill became routine for many landings and launchings for the rest of the expedition, coping with a blast ahead water flow.

Once on land, we scrambled up a slip and slide talus slope with rocks giving away under our boots. As we gained the top of the humpy ridgeline to peer over the other side, we saw a pond in a water filled crater. Rain keeps this depression full. A few swimmers, more correctly dippers, braved the cold water and emerged quickly and back to shore, shivering with goose pimples.



Jump in and you will regret it! A crater filled with cold rainwater creates a pond for hardy swimmers.

Once we were back on the river the scenery ahead gradually became more dramatic with the mountain ridges rising higher and higher. I could see snow clad peaks in the distance. Presently we floated into Lowell Lake, born from Lowell Glacier. This

magnificent spectacle fanned out from ice-fields, extending miles back to the great peaks of the St Elias range. The blue white ice had pulverized everything in its path with both lateral and medial moraines of boulders in long trains, finally ending with a massive terminal moraine.

The terminus was ever changing with tremendous calving of ice into the lake, the sound resembling a reverberating shot. New bergs crashed down repeatedly and drifted downstream. Those floating ice cakes would topple over and create a completely different scenario within a short time, quickly replaced by another round of calving. These floating forms often resembled geometric models, pointed and angular. I often glanced, transfixed, at this grand show.

Once on shore for our campsite, I wanted to know the name of a most dramatic peak at the end of the glacier. This white pinnacle rose majestically above the lesser mountains. "That's Mount Kennedy," Chris said, "named for the former President of the United States." I had known for some years that the Canadian government had honored the memory of Jack Kennedy with the highest, up to then unclimbed peak in North America. After his brother's death Bobby Kennedy, in 1965, ascended the 13,944' mountain with guides who stepped aside to let Bobby have the honor to be the first person to stand on the summit.

"Bobby's son," Chris continued, "was on one of our trips (in August 2013) to pay homage and respect to his father and his uncle. Bobby Jr was able to see Mount Kennedy from the river. He was an accomplished rafter in his own right, and took command (with his two sons) of his own boat."

The next morning dawned sunny and bright. Outfitters frequently schedule day hikes to explore the countryside while those clients less inclined could remain in camp as a rest day. We guests had three options, firstly, a strenuous hike up the slopes of Goatherd Mountain, secondly, an easy nature walk on level terrain below the mountain, or thirdly to stay homebound in camp. I was happy to remain behind with Chris.

Even if I had departed on either trek, one guide would have stayed alone in camp. "It is company policy to have one guide always in camp," Chris said, "for safety purposes, to protect the tents, the rafts and the equipment. It is just common sense." Otherwise a rogue bear might trash the camp, looking for food, a sudden storm and wind might level the tents with resulting damage or a huge wave could even roll up the hillside

and swamp the kitchen and tents. There have been a few cases of unwatched, unguarded camps being looted for valuables by passerby villains. With a guide on duty to respond to any emergency, these potential hazards are greatly reduced.

At supper Terry strummed his guitar as we, sitting around in our folding chairs, all sang, "Colorado Mountain High," "Country Roads," and other great hits. Terry knew all the lyrics. We were all happy, a lark of a trip thus far.



John Denver ought to step aside to listen to "St Elias Mountain High." Heading up a Las Vegas type show on the tundra, Terry strums his guitar to lead a sing along.

The next morning our mood abruptly changed. The sky was gray with a threat of rain. Furthermore our departure would be difficult. The day before there was not more than a stick or two of driftwood floating near our landing site. Now at dawn, floating driftwood had clogged the entire shoreline like a 30-yard wooden mosaic jammed together so close as to block our departure. The winds during the night hours had blown the floating wood ashore, creating a barrier to half-imprison us.



They don't tell you everything. None of the guidebooks or adventure travel brochures ever mention this dilemma. Blown in by wind, driftwood logs block our exit launch at the Lowell Glacier campsite.

I was in the first raft launched with Andy at the oars, as we backed outward. The packed wooden mess gave way under protest. The other rafts in our wake followed in the same path we had created. The other guides aimed their rafts quickly to exploit this slot opening as a slight breeze was beginning to blow the logs back to close this short lived gap. With such a large bottom surface on the water, our rafts had a distinct advantage in avoiding a flip. A much smaller kayak or canoe would have been much more vulnerable to a roll and a dump.



Lowell Glacier comprises a world of its own. Although receding, the glacier still covers many square miles in its relentless battle to grind down mountains.

The whole glacier by now was enveloped with a heavy cloud cover. We wisely stopped early for the day at the end of the lake where it flowed into the Alsek. We camped on a knoll, with the tents huddled close together, standard practice in bear country. A person in a distant isolated tent, perhaps even out both of sight and shouting distance, would be too far away for help if a bear approached. However, we never saw bears during our entire stay there. I called this place "Waterfalls Camp," because of the many falls plunging down the cliff slopes across the river. Most were of intermittent variety, fed with the melting snow in the spring and doomed to dry up during summers.

"Lowell Lake almost certainly had flooded throughout this whole area 400 years ago," Chris said. "Up on the slopes, archaeologists have found canoe paddles and other artifacts left by the First Nation (Indian) people at this high former level of the lake."

Andy was in daily contact by satellite phone with his wife in Haines Junction, and for good reason, to receive the latest weather reports. "There will be rain for the next five days, that is until the end of the trip," he said. "Storms are moving inland off the ocean." Under these threatening conditions our next day's paddle was again cut short as we stopped early. Ahead was Lava North Rapids, a Class Four roller coaster, reserved for guides only. We had already battled high fast water with half submerged low islands, with trees sticking up as markers. The water level had risen higher with the receding melting Lowell Glacier and heavy spring rains. "The water is the highest," Andy said, "that it's been in 40 years." None of us felt cheated, stopping short to avoid the danger ahead.



Home of the Rain God. Fog, cold, wind and rain are unwelcome intruders on the Alsek expedition. A five day storm taxes one's patience and morale.

Our party thus camped at "Mountain View" campsite, well short of the rapids. Most importantly in this newly adopted plan, there was a flat area, free of bushes, to constitute an ideal landing area for our helicopter portage. Once in camp, the guides deflated the rafts and stacked much of the gear in individual piles. Other equipment needed for our kitchen and other activities were to remain in place for the time being. Our pitched tents would await striking until morning.

Under gray skies the next dawn we listened intently as a far off hum grew closer and closer. The copter arrived with a clatter of noise and landed with a swirl of loose gravel and dust billowing in the air. Dion was the copter pilot, a New Zealander in his 30s.

"He has flown all over the world," Andy said, "in Cambodia, Laos and Antarctica. He now lives in British Columbia where his wife is a school teacher."

We ventured up in a half crouch, keeping our heads low. Dion delivered a safety lecture, covering everything from boarding the copter to staying away from the spinning rear rotor propeller blade. Andy re-emphasized that point. "Once we had a client who for some crazy reason, as the pilot turned on the engine, started to walk back toward the rear propeller. We ran up and tackled him to save his life."



Dion, the King of the Kiwi bush helicopter pilots, delivers a safety lecture outside his craft. His flight over and beyond Turnback Canyon resulted in a most efficient and safe portage.



Andy then uttered a comment which for me effectively summed up the whole trip. "A man in the Arctic who is in a hurry, is in a hurry to die." Along those same lines, I have often heard it said, "The North does not allow you a second chance." One mistake and it's all over. One of the guides and four guests boarded the copter, which upon flight hovered over the three deflated raft piles and equipment cradled in a net. Dion then released a steel cable with a hook. The remaining guides standing below clicked and locked the first sling load, whereupon the copter rose to gain altitude. The huge ball of cargo dangled taut without springing loose.

The guides in charge of the loading would not be abandoned. After the last load had been delivered downstream, the copter would return to pick up the guides as passengers on the final flight of this aerial Operation Fly Over Turnback Canyon portage.

I squeezed aboard for the second flight in the back section between two others, with one person up front with Dion. We immediately donned ear muffs to avoid deafness. Off to and over Turnback Canyon! We took flight. I had heard and read about this tortuous ten mile gorge for years. Turnback Canyon is for kayakers only, a raft or a canoe would be able to navigate the upper stretches, whereas the lower section pinches so narrowly that only a kayak is slender enough to blast through this serpentine trashing whitewater chute.

In the kayaking world, Walt Blackadar's first solo descent rivaled other never before pioneering outdoor heroics, equivalent to Thor Heyerdahl's crossing the Pacific in a primitive raft in 1947, or the ascent of Mount Everest by Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay in 1953. Perhaps and without exaggeration, Blackadar's exploit may well be considered the most dangerous, even the most foolhardy, of the lot. Only daredevils need apply, preferably checked out in advance with a complete psychiatric examination.

The flight over Turnback Canyon lasted about 15 minutes. To enhance our viewing, Dion followed the Canyon with his copter, taking upward sweeps. I looked closely and did not see kayakers, nor did I expect to see any. Only a handful through the years have plunged down this wild run and lived.

On one side was the nose of Tweedsmuir Glacier, a blue green hue of rotten ice at the terminus. The glacier extended back for miles, honeycombed with crevasses and pits, often dirty with boulders, as if it were the pock marked face of the earth. The scene was menacing, ugly, elemental and raw. When the sun dims and then dies in a few billion or trillion years, the landscape below would doubtlessly resemble the frozen encasement of the earth.

On the other side, cliffs swept up to Blackadar Mountain, named for Walt Blackadar. Climbers often evaluate a route as to whether or not "it will go." I applied the same principle to what I saw below. In my opinion, I judged that if a kayaker crashed and wrecked his craft or lost his paddle, a climb out of the slippery walls of the deep canyon would test the ability of a most experienced rock climber. In any event, rescue by helicopter would border on a near miracle. Dion landed safely downstream from the canyon on a gravel bar. It was raining. The earlier arrivals had already set up a tarp for shelter. We ate lunch.

For years I had heard of Walt Blackadar's first descent. Under the fly, Chris spoke at length on this incredible passage, a

remarkable feat for a 49-year-old man. “Walt, I have heard,” Chris said, “wasn’t the greatest kayaker in the world. He made his descent in high water and since then only a few others have duplicated his feat and in low water. There is a memorial dedicated to Walt at the beginning of the run, an urn pot and a paddle.” Unfortunately Blackadar paddled one river too many, he was killed in a kayaking accident on the Payette River, Idaho, in 1978.

Chris then jotted down in my field notebook “The Triple Crown” of extreme Northern river descents, the aforementioned Turnback Canyon, the Grand Canyon of the Stikine, British Columbia, and lastly the Devil’s Canyon of the Upper Susitna, Alaska.

Back to work, we reinflated the rafts and loaded the gear. This job took about an hour in the rain. Again, the launch took great skill and precision in very rapid hell bent for speed ahead water. A few hours later we arrived at a soggy, full of puddles campsite. The scene resembled an impressionist painting, nothing clear and distinct in the squishy fog/drizzle. The gray black hanging glaciers on the mountains across the river looked as if they would break loose at any moment.



Don’t drop it! For adequate cooking, an extended wilderness expedition needs more than a few pots and pans. For the two man job, Terry and Andy lift a very heavy kitchen box for loading onto a raft.

I had barely arrived with my pack and bags at the little rise beyond the low gravel bar when Terry arrived. “I’ll help you pitch your tent,” he said. “No, please attend to your own priorities and work first,” I said. “This is my top priority,” Terry responded. Together we spread out the tent, and inserted the rods, making quick work of the situation. I felt safe.

The three guides conducted vigorous exercises almost daily, many of which were taken from the Inuit and First Nation culture for morale and fitness. During the late afternoon, as the other guides were preparing dinner, Terry constructed a donkey shaped head out of cardboard and attached it to a long pole. When a guest volunteered, he or she would be blindfolded and given a long stick. The blinded person would attempt to clout the dummy as it swung back and forth. Misses meant more swings. As the guests, one by one, whaled away, the solid blows eventually battered the dummy so severely that Terry would have to manufacture a new one for the next expedition.

We resumed our battle against the inclement weather for the next day. By late morning, Andy exclaimed, “There’s the Tatshenshini coming in on river left.” I looked through the gauzy haze and saw little.



Not for the faint hearted, Turnback Canyon has earned its no nonsense name many times over. Seen from the air, the Class VI whitewater in the deep ten mile Canyon is fraught with danger.

With this confluence, the Alsek, already quite wide, became a major river with a broad open channel. “The confluence of the Alsek and the Tatshenshini, is,” according to the guides, “the center of the universe.”

At the Walker Glacier campsite the next morning, I was elated to see the sun and blue sky, the last we would experience for the rest of the trip. I rejoiced in viewing the St Elias mountain range, sharp saw toothed mountains with a bite. This scene reminded me of the Cascades in the State of Washington, only these Canadian peaks were mostly unnamed and the majority awaiting first ascents. As we paddled by Walker Glacier, the area offered a geological textbook picture of destruction, produced by the movement of ice. The brief

spell of sunny weather did not hold as it rapidly deteriorated back to its usual foggy no mans land.

“There’s the international boundary between Canada and the United States,” Andy said, waving his hand toward a Matterhorn peak on river left. We all had our passports in plastic sealed envelopes at the bottoms of our dry bags, but there was no need to produce them here for inspection. No customs agent was standing on that desolate shore to check our papers.

The Brabazon Range soon came into blurred view as a gray shroud on river right. We did not say very much in our rafts, just glad to be passing through without mishap. Our guides pulled their oars hard, just like the

Too steep even for mountain goats and Dall sheep. Unnamed peaks at the Walker Glacier campsite basks in bright sunshine in the early morning.



Volga boatman, with a “Yo Ho, Heave Ho” dedication. It was early afternoon when we pulled off the river left for our lunch break. But the stakes involved amounted to much more than eating our sandwiches. Andy and Chris announced a major decision.

“We have to scout out the route ahead on foot,” Andy said, “to see whether or not we should go around an island or through a channel. Ice may have blocked the channel route. We hope to return in an hour.” They then began their hike along the shore, without any semblance of a trail, just a hop skip jump around boulders and bushes, a tough thrash. In about 45 minutes they returned, all of us anxious to hear the results of their reconnaissance. “There is ice ahead,” Andy said, “partially covering the channel. That means we’ll have to sweep around the island wide on an end run and avoid getting jammed.” Our guides were no fools. As I later learned, the route they had rejected is known as the “Channel of Death.” Small craft in that icy waterway are subject to being swamped by swirling icebergs.

Our team, now reunited, paddled on and saw Gateway Knob looming ahead in the fog. There was no ice to block our passage around the far side of this forested hill with cliff faces. As a rule, guides invariably choose the most conservative route on their expeditions to avoid a dump with guests. Safety ranks as the highest priority. On their personal trips, however, they can do what they want, often opting for a more daring route.

We entered Alsek Lake, a large body of meltwater born from the Alsek Glacier, spilling off the mountain. Our home for the night was a level terminal moraine, the size of a football field. The Alsek Lake camp proved to be a more dangerous site than the one at Lowell Lake. “Don’t pitch your tents too close to the glacier side of the lake,” Andy warned. “Otherwise a sudden surge of water from a calving berg might roll up over the low bank and engulf your tent.” No one needed extra coaxing on this advice. Bergs, bigger than houses, calved at any given moment with a sharp gunshot report. The almost tidal waves rushed forward, but stopped well short of our canvas homes.

We had a layover day in camp. A few slogged up Gateway Knob through the wet branches of the forest. They saw nothing, no vista from the foggy top. After routine camp chores before dinner, the guides huddled at a distance under the kitchen fly to discuss mat-

ters. Apparently there was no alarm as they joined us under the dining fly for a hot meal to celebrate our last night on the river. We felt at peace.



Tell that one to the Marines! The camaraderie at dinner around a campfire is always a highlight, with stories, anecdotes and tall tales.

The next morning, faithful and helpful as always, Terry struck my tent and carried my heavy bags down to the boats. Despite marginal weather, we experienced no difficulty in exiting Alsek Lake and rejoining the wide river. I knew we were approaching civilization when I heard, and then saw, fishing boats with their loud putt putt motors. The fishermen waved to us. They were headed upstream, opposite our direction, and were angling for king, silver and sockeye salmon. For hundreds, even thousands of years, the native population enjoyed the bounty of salmon, highly prized, as these fish are very tasty and of excellent quality due to the cold water. Given the Alsek’s remoteness, both commercial and sports fishing, nowadays continue to be excellent.

Presently we landed without fanfare on river left. We then unloaded and waited for an ATV ride, which would lead us over a rough dirt road to the Dry Bay, Alaska airport strip for a flight to Yakutat, then coffee and snacks at a fishing lodge and finally boarding a second flight to Whitehorse. The expedition was over.

“I have never been on a trip in which I feared for my clients’ safety such as this

one,” Andy said. “I was not afraid for myself, but for my guests.” The five days of incessant fog, cold and rain prompted his statement. The weather compounded every move or action of the expedition, which otherwise under sunny skies would have been more of a routine cakewalk as it was so well organized and planned in advance by the outfitter.

One always feels behind in the North, whereupon having paddled one river, you are haunted knowing that there are many more to do, an endless quest. The Tatshenshini will be next.

Practical Information

Canoeists, kayakers and rafters planning to paddle the Alsek should know, up front, exactly what they are getting into, a rough isolated wilderness which demands the utmost respect. This expedition is suited for professional guides in careful control of their clients or for experienced do it yourself outdoor explorers.

Turnback Canyon is reserved for a few devil may care adventurers, a helicopter portage over this fluvial obstacle decidedly makes the most sense.

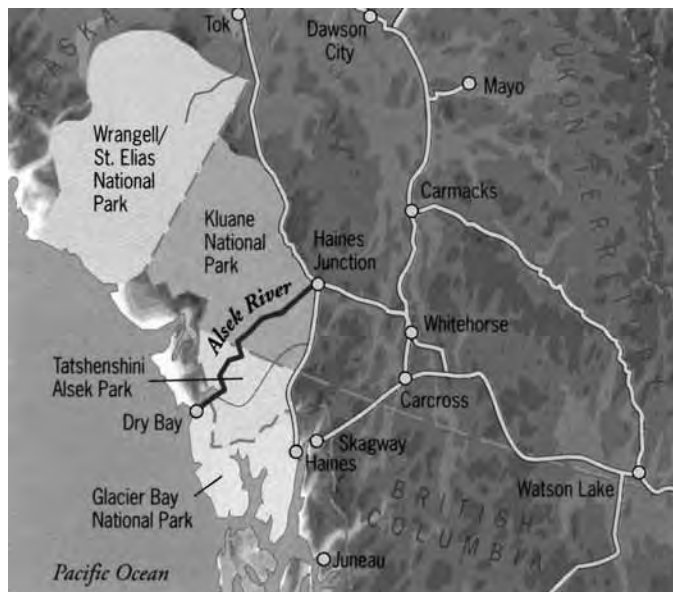
These caveats aside, one who embarks on the Alsek will enjoy the proverbial “trip of a lifetime” with magnificent rapids, mountains, glaciers and campsites. You will not be disappointed.

For guide service, I recommend Canadian River Expeditions and Nahanni River Adventures, PO Box 31203, Whitehorse, Yukon, Canada Y1A 5P7. Tel: 1 (800) 297-6927, 1 (867) 668-3180. Fax: (867) 663-3056.

Kluane National Park

Kluane National Park and Reserve, through which the Alsek River flows, covers 21,980 square kilometres. It’s a land of mountains, ice fields and valleys with a diverse plant and wildlife species and is home to Mount Logan (5,959m), Canada’s highest peak. Established in 1976, Kluane abuts three other protected areas: Wrangell-St Elias and Glacier Bay national parks in Alaska and British Columbia’s Tatshenshini-Alsek Park. Together the parks form the largest UNESCO World Heritage Site. Kluane lies within the traditional territory of the Champagne & Aishihik and Kluane First Nations. Parks Canada and the First Nations governments manage the park cooperatively.

Home for the night on a level terminal moraine at the Alsek Lake campground.



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Rogue River 4th of July

The rocks and boulders had magically grown larger and higher in the river bed. Slowly flowing through this rock garden, the mighty Rogue River was as gentle as a "wild river" can be. Low water and warmer than normal weather caused by the Pacific phenomenon known as "El Nino" had brought on drought conditions from which rock growth in river beds develops. The unusually mild winter with almost no snow or rain in the high Cascades also contributed to low water conditions.

Kayaking on the lower Rogue was, in some stretches between Gold Beach and the little village of Agness 37 miles upstream, an exercise in strolling through damp boulders. Yet the mail boats and the big passenger jet boats operated by Jerry's and Court's seemed to float through on vivid imagination rather than on the 4"-5" of clear green Rogue River water required to keep these speedy behemoths from ripping out their bottoms on the river bed.

The skippers of these excursion and cargo craft are not only to be admired for their finely skilled handling of their big, roaring boats, but also for their consideration for their passengers and for other river traffic such as we kayakers, fishermen and small boat sightseers. They also provide very humorous and informative commentary for their passengers as they pass by the river scenery. They make it all look so easy.

We chose to paddle on the lower Rogue as we had three paddlers in our group who had never been tested on a river, and the lower Rogue is a gentle teacher even though it doesn't mind giving its pupils a bath from time to time in order to hold their attention. Our new kayakers were from the San Francisco Bay area, friends of my brother-in-law Lloyd from his working days before his retirement. They were two father/son teams, Steve and Cory Baker and Brent and Chris Chandler. Cory, who at 14 stood 6'3" and filled the cockpit of his kayak, turned out to be the best "swimmer" of the group by trip's end.

A Forest Service campground at Lobster Creek, about 10 miles above Gold Beach, was our base camp. With a long concrete launch ramp where almost any size trailerable boat can be launched free, and a great gravel bar on which kids of all ages can find ammunition for stone skipping, it is a camper's dream spot. Nearby the jet boats stop at "Massacre Rock" to allow tourists aboard to photograph the spot where an Indian battle is said to have taken place long ago.

As we could not reserve a campsite in a free campground, Lloyd and I arrived July 1st to establish our claim. The California contingent would not arrive for two more days so Lloyd and I drove upstream to Quosatana Camp on our second day, where we launched our kayaks for a three hour trip back down to Lobster Creek. The weather was perfect and small rapids kept us interested as we paddled and drifted and breathed the clean air scented with madrone, manzanita, Ponderosa pine and yerba buena. Osprey and kingfishers competed with Great Blue herons, buzzards and others to provide us with an ongoing natural zoo. The canyon was a panorama of sights, sounds, smells and sensations. The young osprey in their nests lining the shore gave instructions to their parents, from their lofty penthouses, in screeching cries that reverberated up and down the canyon, as the adults went on with their routine diving and swooping.

The "lower coast" folks arrived in an excited, laughing, all talking at once explosion, almost too excited to sit down to our dinner of Dutch oven beans with sourdough bread and salad topped off with fresh fruit dessert. But they managed it. Clean, clear water falls from the canyon wall nearby, providing our drinking water, and it needs no additives to make it safe to drink. How long this will go on depends on how much it is appreciated by the campers who use it.

Next morning the "town" of Agness sat in early morning shadows in the Rogue canyon, yet there was movement at the Cougar Lodge

store as the manager swept the front steps and grinned as we inquired as to the best launch site. He had answered this question before, obviously. Our ride upriver was filled with excited questions, and I answered them with wild stories about "Old Killer" the rapid that eats kayakers, and about all the lost and broken kayaks and canoes that never came home.

"How many have died on the Rogue this year?" "Is this river really as bad as they say?"

"Worse," I answered. I also assured them that the fatalities that hadn't happened yet were too numerous to mention. In their elevated state of excitement, my comments went in and out without taking hold. The three who had no river experience were not totally unfamiliar with kayaking as they had paddled on San Francisco Bay and nearby lakes, so we weren't really overly concerned about their skills.

At 7:30 we entered the first white water accompanied by the standard whoops of youth on adventure. The waves were maybe 10" in the fast moving chute but it was an exhilarating 100 yards. We passed the mouth of the Illinois River and the lower landing for the tour boats. In Agness are three restaurants catering to the tourists, all offering superb food served ranch style on long tables outdoors. The food smells mingle with the fresh river smell and with the pine, madrone and sage. It is too much for your senses and is so tempting that it is a real effort to carry on downstream.

The river curves to the left just below the landing and a small but steep rapid there caused Cory and Steve to go for their first swim of the day. Steve was watching his son tip over when he lost his own balance. Like son, like father! I had led going into the rapid and sat in an eddy to watch the swimming begin. "Stand by to pick up floating objects," I yelled and reached out to snag a small cooler containing lunch. A pack of cigarettes I ignored, and later it was admitted that they weren't missed much. Well, Steve probably missed them a little. The warm water didn't bother the swimmers and we soon had them ready for travel again.

One hundred yards later Cory went over again on a sharp eddy line. "Cory, I think you need to slide your legs down into the boat so your knees don't stick up, you have too much weight too high up and you're top heavy."

He complied and immediately felt much more secure. However, this didn't keep him from capsizing three more times before the trip was over. After the third one he was overheard to say, "I think I'm getting the hang of this thing." He

never clarified whether he meant the capsizing or the recovering and re-entering. I never worried further about his ability after this.

We overtook a family of mergansers which began a wild paddling effort to stay ahead of us. Their young too small to fly, the mother refused to leave them, which afforded us some very close observations of this seagoing duck.

The canyon began to narrow down to less than 100 feet at water level, yet the river slowed, and we paddled with ears attuned to catch the first sound of any of the jet boats headed upstream on their first trip of the day. In this narrow section, a speeding big boat could cause us a lot of trouble. But none developed.

Soon the canyon began to widen and Lloyd, our resident foghorn and erstwhile singer, opened up and tested the echoing qualities of the steep canyon walls. His volume raised the hair on every creature within earshot and ruffled the feathers on the kingfishers and ospreys cruising overhead. The river snickered and gurgled happily as we massaged it with our paddles.

"A bobcat!" Lloyd's voice roared out above the sounds of the river. The big, long-legged cat intently searched the weeds and gravel near a small trickle tumbling into the river from the north bank. He ignored our passing, showing no interest, for he was quite used to people passing his haunts all day every day. Then suddenly, as though successful in his quest, he bounded up the creek with his long stride, and disappeared into the brush which covered the shore.

An osprey flew by with a large trout held so as to be aligned along its line of flight, and the young chick applauded as poppa approached the nest. An otter stalked, half seriously, a flock of lesser Canada geese that was strolling along the boulder strewn shore.

The heat bearing down now into the canyon confines enhanced the smells as the trees and their resins warmed. Yerba buena was the dominant smell overcoming the mossy, damp river smell. It was an enticing fragrance not unlike a woman's perfume, and we became euphoric as we drifted along now dozing. The Rogue worked her magic and we relaxed on her bosom.

"Hey, you guys, we're hungry! It's after noon already!" Our two teenagers jerked us back to reality and led us towards the rocks of the south shore. Lunch was a standup affair, not only because our butts were tired, but because all the head-sized stones offered scant prospect of comfortable seating. While enjoying our meal we noted evidence of the lunching here of otters and racoons, crawfish re-

mains and small fish bones littered the edge of the river.

In the sand are the tracks of the flying "bigfoot", the Great Blue Heron who "krarks" a morose protest as he gracefully eases away to another fishing spot. A rock skipping event gets underway and Steve appears to be the winner of the "gold". But the contest is left in doubt as the whole thing dissolves into a tussle for who can push who into the water. Everybody wins now. For a bunch of supposedly tired and hungry folks, they seem to still have plenty of energy.

The lunch stop was only a few miles above the campground, and darkening skies and rising wind persuaded three of us to pull out and call it finished. The other three decided to press on and fight the wind and finish the trip, about seven more miles. Later the winds died down and the sun returned so they enjoyed a glorious trip to the finish.

After we relayed the kayaks up to the campground, Lloyd and Cory looked for berry patches and I selected a likely looking picnic bench for a nap, awakening to the loud and boisterous arrival of Brent, Steve and Chris with the shuttle craft. Cory volunteered to stay with the three kayaks and we left for Agness and our other vehicles.

Forty-five minutes later we were loaded and our thoughts were focussed on finding something to eat and a place to rest our weary bones. The evening meal was put away amidst much discussion about which lures and bait would be best for fishing after dinner. Dishwashing was forgotten as tailgates flew open and fishing tackle of all sorts emerged. What happened to all that weariness? I guess I saved it all for myself as I couldn't muster up any enthusiasm and stayed in camp.

Two hours later they returned amidst comments of "water's too warm", or "too swift", "too windy", and "too something else." While Lloyd and I were set for an evening of paddling stories, the younger campers soon roared off in a cloud of leaves and exhaust for hamburgers and cokes for a bedtime snack. They never returned until every street, backroad and river access point within reach had been explored. A sudden thunderstorm finally hastened their return.

The rain became steady, and when morning arrived we agreed that our trip was over now. The steady light drizzle covered our loading operations and we said our good-byes in subdued conversations, giving the leave taking a funereal air. But as the loaded vehicles rolled past the stop sign onto the road home, someone yelled, "Next year, same time, okay?" and a chorus answered even more loudly, "Yeah!"

In late October the Buffalo Maritime Center put out an email blast calling on anyone who would be interested in working on some of the Center's ongoing boat projects that need completion or restoration. In the email there was a brief description of what was needed and a day and time to meet at the Center for a more complete description and viewing of the projects. They thought they would get a dozen or so responses. They were wrong, they got over 40, the lovely and talented Naomi and I among them.

The boats to be worked on are the *Honorah*, a mahogany planked sloop, and the *Trippe*, a replica sloop-of-war and communication vessel from O.H. Perry's War of 1812 fleet. This likely will be seen next year moored at Fort Niagara, New York, where the Niagara River meets Lake Ontario. Fort George is on the opposite side of the river in Ontario, Canada.

The meeting was run by Joe Koessler, the Center's President. He explained what work was needed on the boats and when the days and evenings would be for these projects to begin. Everyone was given a form for basic information for contact and such and also a self description of the level of experience, from no experience to very experienced, in a rating one to ten evaluation method. Joe also mentioned that all needed to complete a safety course that would be held in about a week. The meeting concluded with a brief tour of the facilities for those new to the Center.

In less than a week another email was sent giving the dates of the safety meeting and a briefing of how the work was going to proceed. Joe took all the self evaluations and broke them down into groups of similar levels of experience and put together a system of experienced and non experienced working together to do various tasks. Those with little or no experience would help the others and learn by watching and assisting. Brian Trzeciak, the Center's director, ran the safety meeting and video presentation of the shop equipment and how to use it properly and safely.

After the meeting the fun began. The *Honorah*, the restoration project (a donation to the Maritime center from MI), was to be moved from outside the building into the shop and off the trailer. The mast and boom had to be removed and put into the storage area at the other end of the facility. This was done by Joe Koessler, leading a couple of dozen volunteers or wannabe engineers and advisors. There was no shortage of help and ideas. The *Honorah* is a 1939 sloop that I believe is a Phil Rhodes design. It is 37' in length.

Backing *Honorah* into the shop.



The Buffalo Maritime Center

By Greg Grundtisch

Call for Volunteers



Boat and trailer inside waiting to be removed from the trailer with overhead lift.

After helping to get the mast and boom put away, I returned to the main shop. There I discovered that Nick Smith had arrived. Nick is the man who contacted the Maritime Center over the summer about a Seabird Yawl that the wife of a dear friend who had passed away wanted to find a good home for (see the end of this article for more about this boat). We gave Nick a brief tour of the Maritime Center and the boats that need to be completed by the spring summer of 2018.

The 36' *USS Trippe* has been an ongoing project for years and funding is now in place to get it finished and into the water. The same for the sloop *Honorah*. Then there is the Buffalo Wailer that has been slowly but steadily being built over the past several years. This is a somewhat smaller and trailerable version of *Scajaquada*, the Maritime Center's flagship and the Center's logo. The idea is to take the Wailer to the various Maritime events that the *Scajaquada* cannot get to. This is not part of the two main winter projects but is always available to anyone that would like to work on it.



The *USS Trippe*.

The Center has also built and launched a Durham Canal boat by another 40 or more volunteers last year. They completed it a month early and under budget. It is currently floating in one of the "Flight of Five" locks in Lockport, New York.

There has been a change in staff with Roger Allen stepping down from the Director's responsibilities to be the resident Boatwright and Brian Trzeciak taking over as the Maritime Center's Director. Joe Koessler is now the Center's President, taking over much of Dr John Montague's responsibilities. John, the founder of the Buffalo Maritime Center, is the President Emeritus and still very active with the Center. His relentless work and effort and never give up dedication and perseverance, to say nothing of the time he devoted over 30 years, has gotten this very special independent boat building and educational Maritime Center to where it is today.

This one of a kind maritime facility will very likely be the blueprint for others. Its success in teaching students with its hand to hand program, building boats and learning basic woodworking skills and vocational education is exceptional.

Interested readers are more than welcome to tour the Center, help out with some of the ongoing projects or become a mentor, teaching basic skills. No experience needed. It can be a lot of fun, too. Check out the Center's website, buffalomaritimecenter.org, or call (716) 881-0111 for information about these or any other ongoing projects, membership, workshops, classes, etc.

All are welcome and you will meet some really good friendly helpful knowledgeable folks.



The Buffalo "Wailer"

The Lake Erie Shallop was the local boat most commonly used for commercial fishing on Lake Erie prior to the turn of the 20th century. Generally running upwards of 30', the original boats were capable sailboats when managed by fishermen who knew the rough waters at the eastern end of the lake.

The new Buffalo "Wailer" is a 20' version based upon those seaworthy work boats unique to western New York and is being built for use as a program boat by Buffalo Maritime Museum crew. A generous donor, who wished to remain anonymous, made the funding available for the project that is to enable BMC to do a modified "Outward Bound" program to complement our own Hand to Hand hands-on educational programming.

The "Wailer" is being built using composite construction strip planking that will be sheathed in fiberglass cloth. The rugged construction includes two watertight chambers and other built-in safety elements and it is generally felt that she will be a very fast boat that will "wail" along in a breeze. With a crew of two adults the boat will take up to six young people for overnight camp cruising trips around Lakes Erie and Ontario.

Guests looking at the Buffalo "Wailer," a smaller trailerable version of the *Scajaquada* the flagship and logo of the Center.



Black Rock Skimmer

LOA 16', Beam 36"

Designer/Builder Richard Butz

A design exercise, the Skimmer is an adaptation of the now venerable Six Hour Canoe. The objective was to adapt the form to a single person rowing skiff in either fixed or sliding seat configuration. Buffalo has a world class rowing club and some interesting venues for rowing so this boat is intended to be an inexpensive entry to that world. Eventually outriggers and a sliding seat rig will be constructed and tested.

The design idea originated when a Six Hour Canoe need to be adapted to carry a heavier than average occupant. The beam was increased by 6" but the lines never really seemed right. This boat, with its tombstone transom, is an attempt to carry the load and please the eye. You be the judge.

Building moulds for the Black Rock Skimmer. This design is also used for teaching students in the various programs and the Hand to Hand program.

Black Rock Skimmers in production.



About that Seabird Yawl

In the past year or so, due to circumstances beyond our control, Naomi and I have been absent from all that has been going on at the Buffalo Maritime Center. Upon our return at the above described meeting where we met Nick Smith, the Seabird Yawl's good home for the present turned out to be with Naomi and I. By the time you are reading this, the boat should be in Buffalo, New York, covered for the winter with the plan to sail it next season unless we find a better caretaker for it in the meantime. We are actively searching for someone who has the desire, skills and resources to maintain it. Our own fleet that was greatly reduced a few months ago is again growing and we are again trying to scale it down. The boat is said to be in very good shape and comes with a steel cradle for transportation and storage. It will be free to a good home for the cost of transportation. More on this in a future article.

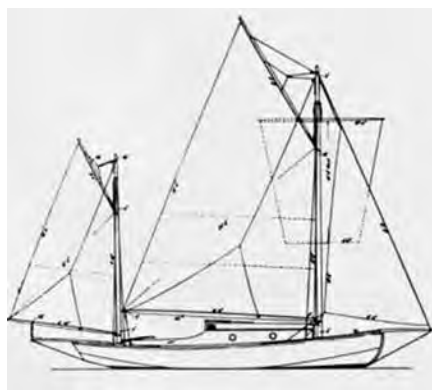
25' Sea Bird Yawl

Designed by T.F. Day & C.D. Mower

LOD: 25'5", Beam: 8'1"

Draft: 2' Board Up, 5' Board Down

Made famous by Captain Thomas Fleming
Day's Atlantic crossing in 1911



The Buffalo Maritime Center has opened up its new bronze foundry. Through offerings of cash and equipment from many generous donors, and many volunteers and staff, this brand new facility held its “first pour” of bronze on September 30, 2017. Before the pouring of bronze there was an open house with tours of the facility and lots of food and beverages.

Our new Executive Director, Brian Trzeciak, began the evening’s events by welcoming all to the first pour, and explained how he became the Center’s current Executive Director, and the mission of the BMC. He spoke of what the Center means, not only to the members and their families and friends, but to the community, schools, and students as well. He then introduced the people who were going to be pouring the molten bronze into the awaiting moulds.

Joe Koessler, our current President, introduced the people who helped build the foundry, and donated time, money and equipment to the Center for it. Also those who donated food and beverages for this glorious pour! The food was excellent and the beverages were as well. Joe also spoke of the Center’s new store that not only sells t-shirts, sweat shirts, caps, jackets and the like, but is now selling wood, epoxy, hardware and such, on line and at the center.

With the new foundry now in operation, the Buffalo Maritime Center adds another dimension, not only to boatbuilding and its related bronze hardware, but for education in metal foundry and community use for artistic purposes and other foundry applications and education.

Henry Schmidt, Bill Koch, and Zack Pritchard also spoke briefly about the foundry

Center’s First Pour

By Greg Grundtisch



Checking the furnace.

and what they were doing to prepare for this first pour, and the basic process. This pour was also filmed in real time and presented on several screens so that those who could not fit into the front of the foundry could see what was happening. As the bronze melted, molds were prepared for pouring. There were two pours of about 6-8 molds in each. These were left to solidify and later opened to see the results.

This foundry, the volunteers, the foundry professionals, and the Center’s Hand to Hand program, are all part of an ongoing mission to get students and others interested in not only the boat building aspect of all this, but to look further by learning some of the basics; such

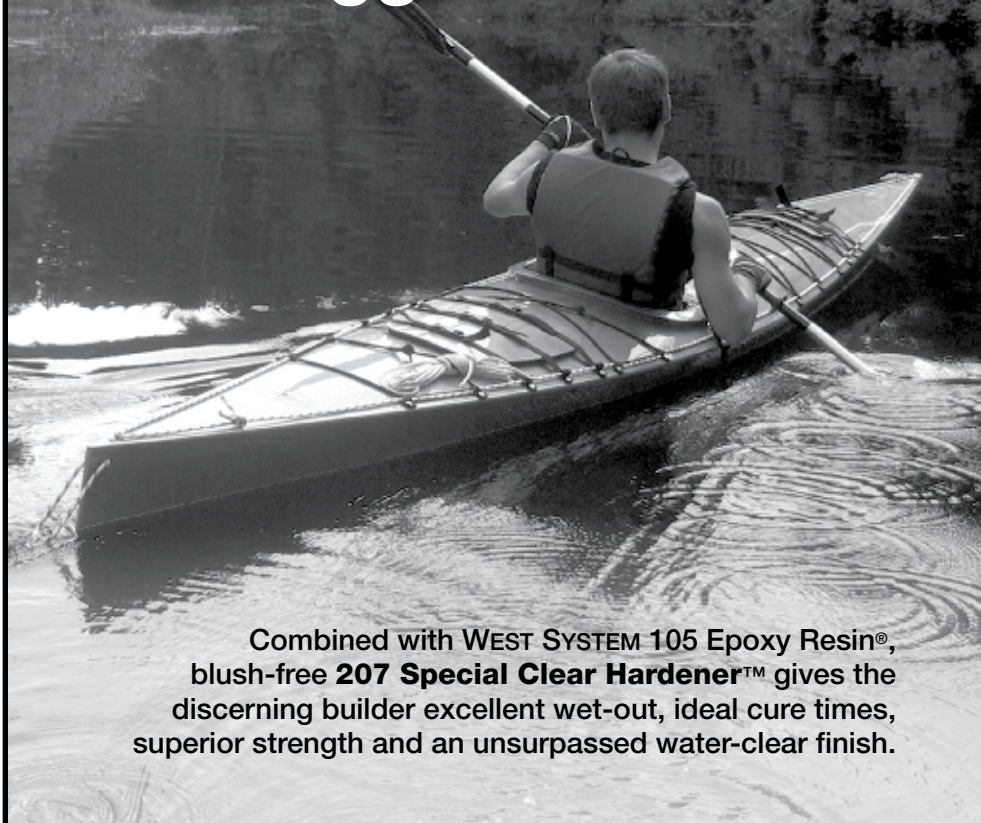
as using a tape measure, hand and power tools, the safe use of shop equipment, working with others toward a common goal and finishing it. That education and simple skill set is a benefit to anyone, no matter what their pursuits may be. All that and much more is offered at the BMC, and not just for students. It is for all interested in learning something new, developing new skills in many areas, and helping out others by working with kids or the community.



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Traditional Boat of the Month Boston Ship Chandler's Whitehall

By Sharon Brown

On Labor Day weekend 2006, Stewart Fisher, his wife and two children drove to Mystic from their Massachusetts home. At Mystic Seaport's Boathouse they rowed *Elysea*, the boat that Stewart's great uncle donated. Laden with tugboat model kits made by volunteer Bob Watts and origami paper boats from Paula Peterson of Boatstuff, young Paige and Evan exclaimed, "Thanks for all the stuff!"



Boathouse staff Nate Funk oversees the Fisher family rental of *Elysea* on Labor Day Weekend in 2006. (Sharon Brown Photograph)

Eleven years later Boatstuff, once a local treasure trove for mariners, has morphed into other commercial outlets and memories of their visit have faded amid new volunteers, but the Fishers' unscheduled Boathouse adventure exemplifies the tenuous thread of historical continuity between those who care about, and document, traditional small craft.

The 16' *Elysea* was donated by her owner, Donald E. Fisher of St Michaels, Maryland, in 1978 along with molds and some construction patterns. Her old name plate dated her 1973 construction by Sam'l T. McQuay of Wittman, Maryland, who followed the lines for a Boston Ship Chandler's Whitehall published in 1951 in Howard Chappelle's *American Small Sailing Craft* (W.W. Norton Co, NY, p 199, Fig 73). This design was used in Boston before 1876, according to Chappelle, and the plan made by Albert Green, a Navy Yard draftsman, was probably taken off the boat by him and used to design a pulling Whitehall for the Portsmouth Navy Yard. "The Boston Whitehall was often fitted to sail," wrote Chappelle, "and was used by harbor fishermen in the 1840s as well as by the various professional boatmen."

In response to a 1990 inquiry by Donald Fisher's daughter Katherine, Ben Fuller, Mystic Seaport's curator at the time, responded, "I know the boat well... I watched your father, Sam McQuay and Joe Liener build her when I was the curator at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum." Indeed, she had a storied beginning. Samuel T. McQuay (1909-1979) married the daughter of Chesapeake Bay bug-eye and log canoe builder John B. Harrison, working with him for 17



years, starting in 1933, and continued in the business after Harrison's death with his son David (Line L. 1976 Oct; Lipke, Paul, 1981, *Plank on Frame*, International Marine).

According to Lipke, the elder McQuay used a special hand plane developed by retired master boat builder Joe Liener to fair the inner face of the stem of a 16' Whitehall. McQuay died not long after the interview for Lipke's book and one is tempted to believe this plane was used in *Elysea's* construction. Joseph Liener, retired in 1969 from the Philadelphia Naval Yard and moved to the St Michaels area where he volunteered for the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, sharing his lifetime in boats with colleagues and visitors while documenting the collections before his death in 2002.

Boathouse volunteers Joe Pelletier, Bryan Hammond and Ben Ragsdale demonstrate *Elysea* during a 2002 Boathandling Class. (Sharon Brown Photograph)



Fisher brought *Elysea* to Mystic's annual Small Craft Workshop in 1976 and John Gardner included a photograph of her under sail in his September *National Fisherman* column. It was two years later, subsequent to his participation in the 9th annual Small Craft Workshop, that Dr Fisher donated her to Mystic, the same year that the late R.D. "Pete" Culler's Rushton canoe *J. Henry* became part of the Museum's collection" (Brown, S. 20Q7. *Messing About in Boats* 24(23) March 15:13-17). Their owners had been swept up by the enthusiasm and emotion of the workshop (Windrose 9(4) Aug/Sept 1978).

Elysea's lapstrake hull is cedar planked with steam bent white oak frames and copper rivet fastenings. The transom, sheer strake, trim and back rest are mahogany. The interior is oiled and the thwarts and stern sheets are cedar (or possibly cypress). Topsides are painted white and the sheer strake is varnished. *Elysea* was built with two rowing stations, each with a single tholepin and grommet to hold the oar against the pin. In practice, only the aft station is set up and the boat load is balanced with the oarsperson more centrally located fore and aft.



During winter maintenance in February 2017, Boathouse staff Jim McGuire finishes repairs to the *Elysea's* thole pin pads. (Sharon Brown Photograph)

She is usually rowed with 7½' or 8' spruce or ash oars, straight bladed or spoons. Since she can accommodate up to five souls and the family dog, the resistance her keel

affords when a novice oarsperson tries to negotiate her in tight quarters has, in the past, been hard on the life span of dedicated *Elysea* oars. She takes potluck now on assessment of the dock attendants. While the tholepin may seem intimidating at first, it is very easy to row with and, for the novice, the grommet acts like a closed oarlock. This may feel awkward when back watering and the oar pulls against the grommet, away from the pin. For hot, steamy days *Elysea* was equipped with a red and white striped awning which may help to offset the effect of the dark interior which absorbs the heat but this has not been rigged in a long time.



A close up of a thole pin and grommet shortly after the May 2017 commissioning of the Boathouse fleet. (Sharon Brown Photograph)

A sailing Whitehall, *Elysea* has a centerboard which sits to one side of the keel and will affect the trim of the unwary if the oarsman centers on the centerboard rather than the keel. *Elysea* has a small spritsail main with boom and is loose footed. The rudder is fitted with a yoke and tiller lines. Perhaps undercanvassed, she is sluggish in light airs and requires some finesse to bring her through the wind on a tack and crew help to see forward around the jib. Better suited for off the wind and, since she is long and sleek, one would do well to do a few practice tacks before trying to round up alongside the dock in a breeze.

Whitehalls are attractive small craft and, while much has been written about them, their origins are yet vague. John Gardner's first published Whitehall articles were in the *Maine Coast Fisherman* in 1953 (June, August, September, November) but his appetite had been wetted much earlier working during WWII at Graves in Marblehead alongside legendary old time boat builder Charles A. Lawton (1858-1957) who built fancy Whitehalls many years earlier on the Charles River for H.V. Partelow & Co. At Graves John also worked with Gerald B. Smith (1906-1994) whose father, Captain Charlton L. Smith (1869-1944) wrote from first hand experience about Whitehalls for *The Rudder* in 1943 (August).

Born in Chelsea, near Boston, when shipbuilding was a primary industry, the elder Smith spent his youth hanging around the yards and later, while working on boats and in shipyards, he went to night school studying naval architecture. He corresponded with Howard I. Chapelle who wrote about Whitehalls in *American Small Sailing Craft* and *Boatbuilding* (1941, also by W.W. Norton & Co). Smith also corresponded with W.P. Stephens (1854-1946) a working seaman, yacht

designer and prolific writer who chronicled *Canoe and Boat Building For Amateurs* (1884) and *American Yachting* (1904) and his papers in the rare manuscript collection of Mystic Seaport's G.W. Blunt White Library include important notes on Whitehalls.

Influenced by these scholars, John continued to write about Whitehalls, incorporating much of his research into his first book *Building Classic Small Craft Vol 1* (International Marine, Camden, Maine) discussing the origin of the Whitehall and for some time in the mid 1970s considered writing a book on them alone. However, like Stephens before him, he had multiple interests, too many to see it through.

Characteristic models usually have plumb stems, fine wineglass shaped transoms, full length plank on edge keels, carvel planking (though not always) and frames laying perpendicular to the keel. Frequently the sheer was of oak, bright finished and overlapped the next, or binder, plank with a decorative bead along the bottom edge. They ranged 16' to 21' in length and not more than 4' in beam. They were workboats but kept in good working order, harbor taxis run by crack crews and called on by their businessmen owners to provide services in haste to large vessels entering busy ports like New York, Boston and San Francisco in the mid 1880s. They were often raced and usually for significant cash purses (Gardner, J. 1973. *Log of Mystic Seaport*, Summer).

The intriguing history of their origin remains an issue, where and when and if indeed there is a type. W.P. Stephens thought they were in New York as early as 1820, Chapelle thought that they were in mass production in New York boat shops in the 1840s whereas Smith thought the Whitehall first appeared in Boston in 1870.

Since 1988 and *Elysea's* inclusion in The Boathouse livery fleet, she has carried thousands of people on waterborne excursions into Mystic River waters, putting them in touch with their maritime heritage in a practical manner, teaching them immediately about tholepins and grommets and the tracking qualities of Whitehalls. *Elysea's* sweet transom haunts memories. "Boathouse moments," all different, would not be possible were it not for the generosity and forethought of those who steward small boats and offer them to Mystic Seaport Museum which, in turn, assumes their care and in some cases longevity through use.

During a break from skippering *Breck Marshall* in August 2017, professional mariner, Bryan Hammond fashions a new grommet for *Elysea* with facetime skill appreciation from Tia D'Alessandro. (Sharon Brown Photograph)



Around the Shops



At the Seaport Boathouse David Moore applies the final coat of Cetol to *Elysea's* rail.



In the Seaport John Gardner Boat Shop Bill Littell and Len Mierzejewski roll and tip the topsides of a Beetle Cat.

At our TSCA Avery Point Boathouse Bill Armitage and Brian Cooper replace some siding to celebrate UCONN AP's 50th Anniversary





Dan cruises by to say hello to Bill and Kris.

Our Saltwater Row

Mid day September 16 was a beautiful day to be on the water as the sun shone and the breeze filled in. We launched from the ramp at the baseball field just before the railroad underpass on the road to the airport. Lots of parking, no line at the ramp, it's amazing

what a low railroad bridge does to keep the bass fishing boats at bay. We launched at 10am, Dan Nelson in his Southwester dory, Rene Boelig and I in the peapod and the Meiers (Bill and Kris) in their double paddle kayaks. We rowed/paddled under the railroad bridge, alongside the airport runways and through the old trolley bridge abutments to

The Salmon River Row

Dan Nelson reports that it was a misty day Saturday, October 14, on the Salmon River as he led the annual Fall Row and Paddle. In keeping with this issues' Whitehall theme, here is a photo of member Brian Cooper rowing his new skin-on-frame Whitehall. Quite a change for the leader of the Connecticut Sea Kayakers but he seems to be managing nicely. Beautiful boat, Brian, on a beautiful river. Thanks, Dan, for your leadership on this now annual outing.



a sandy spit to stop, raise masts and set sails. Then we were off, racing against the falling tide (and losing, leaving a bit of bottom paint on the high spots). We made it all the way to the end of the beach area and out into the harbor, only to meet the bass fishermen cruising back in so, on a failing breeze we turned back to our protected lagoon. There, both the wind and the tide came up and we cruised on back to the ball field for a pullout and late lunch.

Rene steers with his right ear as he adjusts his first loose footed sail.





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The Antique Boat Museum

By Greg Grundtisch

This stop at the Antique Boat Museum in Clayton, New York, was our last stop on our way home last fall from a Maine sailing holiday followed by some stops at boating museums along the scenic way home through some impressive mountains. After our stops at the Lake Champlain Maritime Museum and the Adirondack Experience, we found a place to spend the night in the Saranac Lake area. We had dinner in the village of Lake Placid and a brief tour of the other lakes and towns in the area and called it a night.

The next day was our last and we needed to quickly return home. The lovely and talented Naomi thought it would be a good idea to make a brief stop at the Antique Boat Museum, even if it was a little out of the way. It was a good decision. We hadn't been there in 20 years.

We have a great appreciation of the skill and craftsmanship that goes into building and restoring those slick and shiny mahogany outboards and runabouts, but they aren't our greatest interest in boating. So we decided to look at this from a different approach than most when visiting this very large museum with extensive and expansive collections of many boat designs and builders.

Ice boating and ice harvesting was once very popular in the days of old. The collection of early iceboats and work boats that supported ice harvesting was impressive but there were other boats that we were surprised to see, vintage boat "sleds" that were powered by aircraft engines, early paddle boats, rowboats with mechanical oar locks that we had never seen or heard of before, early air boats, snowmobiles and kite sailing with ice skates, among many others.

Electric Skiff Putt *Elektra*

Builder: Aaron Turner

Length: 22' – Beam 4.25'

This electric skiff putt was built by Aaron Turner at the Antique Boat Museum through funds provided by Bill Turner. *Elektra* is modeled after the 1911 L.E. Fry skiff putt *Addie* in the Museum's collection. The skiff putt is a natural evolution from the rowing skiff that came with the availability of small inboard engines. Early skiff putts were designed more or less the same way that the traditional skiffs had been, double ended with the almost the same profile and proportions, scaled up for the motor. Through 2013 and 2014 a team of volunteers installed the current Elco electric motor. Many thanks to Don Badour, Seb Borrello, Chuck Cripe, Dick Lodivco, Rick Micoli, Roger Paolini and Bob Sears for their help.



As we expected, there were also plenty of those highly varnished mahogany boats from a seemingly endless number of builders and designers, engines and outboards, large yachts and all sorts of small rowing, paddling and sailing boats. The latter varieties are the ones we had the most interest.

The museum has about a half dozen buildings that house race boats and maintain the engines and outboards, a boat shop where they maintain and restore the museum's collection and donations and a gift shop and grand entrance in the main building. All of these are on some very pretty grounds that are on the shore where the St Lawrence River meets Lake Ontario. It is Almost Canada and if you are in good shape you can almost walk to the border if you so desire.



In the 1960s a small nucleus of people who were determined to preserve the nautical and cultural heritage of the St Lawrence River established the Thousand Islands Museum on the St Lawrence River in Clayton, NY. Within the museum, a group concerned with preserving the area's rich boating heritage formed the Antique Boat Auxiliary and organized a show of antique boats in 1965. Afterwards, the Auxiliary began to build a collection of boats and developed land based exhibits in the town of Clayton.

In the meantime, the boat show became an annual event and grew steadily in size. Under the auspices of the Antique Boat Auxiliary, a small group of supporters acquired several parcels of waterfront property in the early 1970s and established a permanent museum to host the annual boat show.

The new institution received a provisional charter from the New York

The Antique Boat Museum

A Brief History from Wikipedia



State Department of Education as the 1000 Islands Shipyard Museum in 1980 and was granted an absolute charter in

1986. A 1990 amendment to the charter changed the institution's name to the Antique Boat Museum.

In the years since its founding, the museum has built up a substantial waterfront campus that encompasses 4.5 acres of public program space, 1900' of dockage and 1300' of St Lawrence River shoreline. The ten buildings on the campus contain 29,000 square feet of exhibit space and 33,000 square feet of public programming, collections storage, archives, library and administration space. The exhibits and programs are supported by 20,000 square feet of boat collection storage located a short distance from the museum's main campus. In the last decade, the museum has undertaken a substantial capital expansion program to consolidate its real estate holdings and construct buildings and infrastructure worthy of its collection and programs.

Messing About in Boats, January 2018 – 27

Small Boats

The Malbec 18 recently managed stardom and the attention of the small boat sailing world. Argentinean designed, this impressive pocket cruiser shows off a 6' cockpit and enough internal room for a Porti Potty, sleeping accommodations for four (if you are all rather small) and a slide out galley with a sink. *Sail* magazine claims it can be a "nifty little club racer." Aesthetically it looks very pretty.

Reverso Air is a small 11' dinghy from France. Unto itself the boat can sail well provided with hiking straps and a performance square top mainsail. But the real cool aspect of this little craft is that it comes apart in four segments that nest inside each other. It can easily fit in the back of an SUV or Crossover. The company maintains that the pieces can be assembled in minutes without fancy tools. At 165 pounds, the dinghy can be easily hauled around.

Small boat enthusiasts who love music should check out October Duckworksmagazine.com for a couple of homespun ditties about boat building and sailing.

The same edition featured Dan Rogers, a writer, fusser and sailor of small boats, who discovered that old sailboats can still sail after it is no longer a sailboat. Rogers, a chronic mechanical maniac when it comes to tinkering around with boats, took an old sailboat and turned her into a motorboat by cutting off some keel, rebuilding the cabin and installing a motor. One day the engine died. Poo poo, happens to the best of us. Being unable to find the problem and powerless to generate power, Rogers remembered that his *Miss Kathleen* was born a sailboat and still had the proper genes for sailing. He raised a very large stern hatch and used it like a mizzen. He quietly sailed back to the dock.

Captain Dan is a prolific writer (perhaps "inexhaustible" is a better word) who also is the founder of Frankenwerkes, his center for the creation of things that float that also serves as a barn, storage shed, workshop and place to keep him off the streets and out of the bars. It employs a total of one. Frankenwerkes took an old, decrepit Glasspar Seafair and totally remodeled it by building a new deck and cabin and assorted other things before adding a 1959 Johnson Seahorse that supposedly gives 50hp (his words, not mine) at a rate equal to the gas prices of 1959. (Some of us actually remember when gas was at \$.30 per gallon or even \$.22 during a gas war.) He calls it something boys lusted for before they discovered girls. Evidently many of us have come full circle.

Small Craft Advisor, Duckworks and Turnpoint Design teamed up to create a small boat for the amateur craftsman. The Skate 15 is one of those "anyone can build it" vessels that make lumberyards managers drool and big box store tool department clerks weep for joy. Skate has a rotating wing mast (a Hobie 14 mast does just fine), port and starboard water ballast tanks with easy to use spigots, 200sf of sail, sealed chambers for flotation, twin centerboards and rudders, a "huge" watertight cabin all made from ultra light "stuff." Frankly, I will stick to my factory made Potter 15, thank you very much.

Accidents

In yet another tragic story so common it is hardly newsworthy, a small and overcrowded boat of refugees fleeing Myanmar capsized off Bangladesh drowning at least a dozen but 30 are still missing, mostly children.



Over the Horizon

By Stephen D.
(Doc) Regan

dren. These are among the half million Muslims who have fled Myanmar because of the "ethnic cleansing" by the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army. In truth, this is simply another incident in a protracted war between the Muslim minority and the Hindu majority. One has to wonder how many people are killed annually in the name of God. One also has to wonder about how bad conditions have to be before people try something dangerous in order to live in Bangladesh.

Oil Barge B255, towed by the tug *Buster Bouchard*, erupted in fire near Port Aransas, Texas. Coast Guard from Corpus Christi and other groups immediately responded to rescue crew, seek the missing, prevent pollution and extinguish the fire. Sounds pretty easy except that the barge was carrying 13,000 barrels of crude. One crewman died and two were missing.

In the category of It Is Monday and It Sucks, *Pacific Paradise*, a fishing vessel in the long line fishing fleet of Hawaii, ran aground off Waikiki Beach, dumping about 200 gallons of oil into the bay. No problem, right? Salvage teams hooked up to the bow and stern pulled, yanked and pushed to no avail. They tried to pump ship to lessen weight, only to have the pump's fuel catch fire and created additional problems. Honolulu's Fire Department had to use helicopters to dump water on the unfortunately named boat. Additional salvage efforts failed and the stinking old rust bucket remains grounded in full view of all the vacationers on the famous beach.

In spite of the stupidity of the bridge officers aboard the *USS Fitzgerald* when it had one of the spate of collisions between US Navy ships and civilian ships, the military recognized the heroic efforts of the crew to save the ship that had 19 spaces flooded killing seven crewmen. Thirty-six of the crew were awarded the Navy and Marine Corp Commendation Medal for heroic, outstanding achievement and meritorious service. Two ombudsmen who worked with the families of the deceased and injured were awarded Flag Letters of Commendation. These men fought for 16 hours to keep the ship afloat despite potential electrocution, dangerous gases and flooding. Commander Bryce Benson, Commanding Officer, was duly relieved of command.

Crew of the container ship *MSC Giannina* could not find Captain Juri Khartonou, a Ukrainian national, one morning. After a complete search of the ship they notified officials in Italy who immediately launched a search and recovery mission to no avail. Nothing was missing in the skipper's quarters and the crew noticed nothing disturbing about him prior to his disappearance. The ship was bound for Genoa where it is currently held along with the crew as investigations continue.

It is hard to imagine, but the refugee drownings in the Mediterranean are such commonplace events that the press no longer says much about the subject. Save the

Children and Doctors without Borders have both ceased maritime rescue operations, in no small part due to the harassment of the Libyan Navy. An unbelievable number of bodies litter the beaches from Italy to Greece.

The Indian Coast Guard ceased search and recovery missions for the crew of the *Emerald Star*, a bulk carrier that went missing while hauling iron ore bound for Luzon from wharves in China. The Coast Guard did find a second capsized lifeboat but no bodies. A previous lifeboat find also yielded no evidence of humanity. Various officials in the freight business insurance, such as GARD, condemned the transport of wet iron ore that China and Indonesia are notoriously shipping. Wet iron ore is difficult to manage and has a propensity to build up on a vessel's side causing ship instability and potential for capsizing.

Gray Fleet

The Congressional Research Committee released its report on the LCS ships on which the Navy pinned high hopes and a boatload of money (or should that be "shipload?"). The lengthy list of failures has long been a topic discussed in this column. America has 32 of these splendors available for duty (if they are still afloat). From the very beginning LCS ships have been controversial starting with Sen John McCain's opposition to their construction and the philosophy behind them. Proponents maintained that these would be small ships at 3000 tons, packed with modern technology, easily crewed by a meager 40 sailors and having a much shallower draft than anything else in the Canoe Club. They could be had for a measly \$589 million plus full mission equipment at \$7.16 billion. The Navy intended to use the LCS for Anti-submarine Warfare (ASW), Mine Counter-measures (MCM) and Surface Warfare.

Lockheed Martin offered one design while General Dynamics offered an entirely different model. In Washington, DC, fashion, both snouts were heavily into the financial trough so both designs were accepted with 26 coming with Lockheed's looking like a little frigate and 26 General Dynamics's version that was a trimaran with a down curved bow. Each had a unique propulsion configuration and required different engines.

Now Congress, always impatient and forever fickle, has decided that 52 of such beasts should be reduced to 30 and larger frigates be built instead. Congress can be forgiven simply because the chronic failures of the LCS, the constant amendment of missions and the predicable cost overruns. Of course, the home states of Lockheed and General Dynamics are screaming to high heaven. President Trump, the essence of diplomacy, has been attempting to foist the LCS on our Middle Eastern allies (if indeed, we actually have Middle Eastern allies).

One can hardly hold his or her breath waiting for ever changing exciting news about the finest Navy in the world. This writer must publically admit that he is the president of the Cedar Rapids (Iowa) Chapter of the Navy League of the US lest readers think I am biased about our Gray Fleet.

Merchant Fleet

The heavy lift ship *Treasure* ballasted down so that salvagers could move the US Navy ship *John McCain* onboard for transport to Yokosuka, Japan, where the destroyer will undergo significant repairs to her damaged hull that occurred when it collided

with the *Alnic MC* off Singapore, killing ten crewmen. The damage to the *McCain* (DDG-56) is startling, showing a patch from about 12' above the waterline to the keel and a nice dent up to the lifelines. The photos from *Treasure* are very interesting. This is one whale of a ship that can lower itself deep enough to place a destroyer onboard and then rise for transoceanic travel. The war ship is pretty small in comparison.



Oh wait, news happens fast around the seas. The Navy's budget will take another hit compliments of crew incompetence during the warship's collision. Unfortunately, the huge *Treasure* carrying the *McCain* hit really bad weather and diverted to the Philippines where experts examined the destroyer and found that it had developed a 4' crack in the hull. As the Norwegians say, "Uff da!"

Libyan Coast Guard attacked and sank a product tanker, *Goeast*, off the line that divides Libya from Tunisia. Libya stated that the tanker was loading fuel from an offshore pipeline and refused to acknowledge radio communications stating that the Coast Guard would board and inspect the ship. When the *Goeast* did not acknowledge receipt of the message, the Libyan's opened fire and sank the ship. The ship is one of four Comoros flagged ships owned by Uvas-Trans, operating in Russia controlled Crimea. Several countries have accused the owners of smuggling fuel obtained from offshore loading pipelines over recent years. Information about the crew or pollution has not been released.

Russia has discovered that sanctions by the Western nations have halted the construction of the Motherland's newest icebreaker, *Arktika*, because necessary parts for the engine turbines are unavailable. Vladimir Putin himself called a stop to construction. *Atomflot*, the nuclear icebreaker, had to haul its elderly sister, *Sovietsky Souyez*, to the junkyard because it was too costly to keep her afloat. The sanctions are causing a variety of problems for the Russians because they are forcing delays and shutdowns of oil drilling plants for lack of icebreakers to keep the rigs in supplies. This unto itself caused Exxon to cancel a \$500 billion deal with Rosneft, a Russian oil development company. To add it her woes, Russia leased large areas in oil fields in Scandinavia but declining oil prices and shaky markets have developed gargantuan economic red ink. Is it not ironic to note that the former Reds are floating in red ink?

Clipper New Haven exited Baltimore with 6 million bottles of water for the people of Puerto Rico. While this is not really exciting news, this vessel sails under a Marshall Island flag and not is not allowed to carry American goods to an American port under the Jones Act

until President Trump waived it for ten days. Eleven ships sailed under this waiver. The Jones Act, a highly controversial law, has been on the books for almost a century.

The Jones Act

The Merchant Marine Act of 1920, commonly known as the Jones Act (introduced by Wesley Jones, R-WA), one of the most controversial laws, easily misunderstood and much maligned, remains on the books for almost a century despite periodic attempts to change it. President Trump offered a ten day exemption from the law in order to send aid to Puerto Rico after the devastating hurricane that destroyed much of the island's power and water supply. Mr Trump's action again stirred up conversation about the law.

The Act is not a limited mandate but a broad legal document with a plethora of components covering a variety of issues. *Sea History*, a publication of the National Maritime History Society, published an in depth two part article trying to explain this complex legislation. Author Michael Rauworth noted some specific items covered by the Act. Three groups of workers are not covered by worker's compensation, military personnel, railroad workers and seamen. The whys and wherefores are extensive and worthy of a lengthy book.

Maintenance and Cure, a factor of this law, goes back to the 12th century when Eleanor of Aquitaine recognized that sailors worked in sundry climates, tended to be poor and were working in dangerous places. She decided that captains and ship owners were responsible for the health and well being of their crew. This "entitlement" itself covered activities ashore as well as onboard, per diem costs, lost wages, etc. The Supreme Court, in a 2007 5-4 decision, ruled that if an owner refused to cover the injuries of a seaman, the crewman could sue for punitive damages. Entitlements in general are under fire from the political right.

Unseaworthiness of a ship places the responsibility on the owner. Considered "strict liability" (in legal terms), owners are accountable even if the problem was not their fault in the first place. The precedence comes from situation like a seaman getting injured when a shackle fails and a load causes injury. The Court found that even though the owners could not have seen the faulty engineering of the shackle, they were still liable. State courts have made decisions that will probably force the Supreme Court to clarify this element of the Jones Act.

Cabotage is a legal term meaning that nations may regulate domestic sea trade of ships flying the flag of that nation. This third element of the Jones Act is, perhaps, the most controversial and arouses flaming emotion from both sides of those effected. Specifically, this law states that all ships trading between ports within the borders of the United States and its minions (Guam, Puerto Rico, USVI, etc) must be ships that are built in the US, crewed by US seafarers, and fly the flag of the US. This is the part that Mr Trump waived for the emergency in Puerto Rico.

Ship builders within the US have, for 28 years, strongly alleged that they would be crushed if cheap ships from elsewhere could be allowed to haul within US ports. Ship builders have gone broke all over the US in recent years and the remaining few are very thin skinned about this part of the law. Shipbuilding, from tugs to aircraft car-

riers, is a monstrosity huge financial business with thousands of employees who keep their political allies under fiscal wing. They posit that lifting their protection would lead to a nationwide economic collapse. The US Navy and subcontractors across the nation are in total agreement.

US businesses that ship their wares and ship owners vehemently counter that they are forced to raise prices because of the higher costs of shipping. If foreign built ships, tugs, barges, etc, could be used, the expenses would be significantly lower. A ship built in China or Bangladesh is significantly lower in cost because of minimum wage differences between them and the US. Furthermore, crews from the Philippines or Indonesia work for much lower wages than those in the US Merchant Marine. What this all means is that a shipment of product X from Baltimore to Houston via the waterways on a foreign built ship manned by foreign sailors would be substantially cheaper than under the Jones Act. Sen John McCain (R-AZ) unsuccessfully tried to annul the act siding with shippers. He was adamantly opposed by the Congressmen from California, Louisiana and other shipbuilding states.

Both sides on this issue have fought for 98 years and this hot potato (potatoe, if you are Republican) will be fought in Congressional halls in a bloody battle of "NO! I'm the Good Guy, Here" legislators.

The final aspect of the Jones Act, surprisingly, came to pass because of the 13th Amendment abolishing slavery. Progressive Republicans led by Robert LaFollette and supported by Theodore Roosevelt, clarified the White Act of 1898. Prior to 1898, if a crewman quit his job before his contract was up, it was considered desertion and the perpetrator could face fines and imprisonment. This was upheld by the Supreme Court in 1898, much to the displeasure of the Progressive wing of the GOP. The White Act did away with imprisonment but LaFollette's Seaman's Act of 1915 was the Magna Carta of the Sea.

LaFollette, in essence, said that being unable to quit a job was tantamount to slavery that was illegal under the 13th Amendment. The bill went further. In those days crews worked for peanuts and tended to be poor all the time. When they went ashore, they often asked for an advance on their wages from the captain. Occasionally skippers would make agreements with whorehouses, boarding houses and bars so that they would extend "credit" to the sailors. These "crimps" would then deliver the sailor back to the ship for a fee. If sailors quit before they repaid the debt or worked it off it was considered a criminal act, therefore, the mariner was enslaved.

This overview is but the veritable tip of the iceberg. The Jones Act covers student training, liability, Coast Guard rights and multiple additional concerns, each of which is controversial, protective, complicated, intricate, thorny and convoluted. In the final analysis, the Jones Act remains one of the most significant pieces of legislation ever passed and it must be respected for its all encompassing overhaul of sailor's rights.

The Gougeon Brothers ~ Gentlemanly Indomitability,

Reprinted from *Dinghy Cruising*,
Journal of the Dinghy Cruising Association UK

by Hugh Horton

JAN AND MEADE GOUGEON wanted to build better boats and repair fiberglass ones. No matter the brand of epoxy you and I have used, broad applications to boats began in Bay City, Michigan in the 1960s, as the brothers built DN ice boats, and Meade's trimaran *Adagio* in 1969-70.

My first use of their glue was in 1972-3 when I bought some for my dad. Hal had decided to build a strip canoe in the dining room in Michigan, while my mother was visiting her parents in Florida. I'd talked once on the phone with Jan about the suitability of kiln-dried pattern makers' lumber, which he said was ideal. When I picked up the epoxy in the big boat shop, Jan, I think, was the fellow who handed it to me.

Hal did build a comely solo canoe. Once, though, after a batch had been mixed, when the AT & T Princess telephone rang he inadvertently glued the phone to its wall bracket.

In 1998, Meade saw my sailing canoe *Puffin* slipping up a light



breeze at an event the Gougeons sponsored. He sailed her and wanted to buy her, but I built him a better one, *Serendipity*.

Soon we realized we had many common interests beyond boats, including the Detroit Tigers baseball team, and politics. In later years he would often cite us as an

example of friends having respectful disagreements.

In 1999, when I delivered *Serendipity*, I'd 'challenged' him, he said, to develop a better rig. Within months he'd built two, then a third, and on and on.

Part of Meade's fascination with canoes was because the church kept good family records. He knew some of his ancestors had been Voyageurs of the fur trade.

Hugh (left) and Meade Gougeon sailing at Killbear Provincial Park, Parry Sound of Georgian Bay, Lake Huron, Ontario, Canada, 2009 Photograph: Bill Ling



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On the trail of the fur trade Voyageurs, Jan and Meade Gougeon in shot, and canoes *Puffin*, *Serendipity*, & *Spirit*
 Photograph: Hugh Horton

In 2000, our first fall trip to the North Channel of Lake Huron was on part of the Voyageurs' canoe route from Montreal westward, that started in the middle 1600s and lasted a couple of hundred years.

Driving the two hundred foot high bridge over the five miles wide Straits of Mackinac is always exhilarating. It's a wild place, shaping weather and history at a crossroads of the big lakes. Windows down, we craned our necks looking east and west, smiles bursting. Meade had been keyed up for weeks, buying charts and camping gear, paddling at least every other day, setting his tent and lighting his backpackers' stove. Below us was the route of the Voyageurs.

Had we been above the Straits two hundred years before, we'd likely have seen huge canoes lugging stores and trade goods west and furs east, unless the weather forbade it.

His first night in a tent since his youth, Meade slept over ten hours. In the morning I was fidgeting. I'd had coffee hours before and wanted to make his. I'd begun to be concerned, but I could hear snores. How could a fellow sleep so long on jumbled, angular blocks of Precambrian rock, even if an irregular, foot thick layer of moss was beneath his tent? He said it was one of his best sleeps in decades.

The next night's island had a tiny grassy-sandbar meadow. Before sunset, with a bottle of wine, we clambered a hundred yards to the island's west side.

From sunset into dusk we were

enthralled by a swath of flashing thunderheads over calm Georgian Bay, too distant to hear. Back at the tents, the moon came up as bright as a headlight. Later, something big trundled down the hill behind us, heavily crunching brush. In the morning, moose tracks were in gravelly mud thirty yards from our tents.

The next year, September 12th, 2001, Meade and I drove our canoes again to the North Channel. We'd waited a day from our plan because of the Twin Towers' tragedy. Although we'd feared a long delay, only customs' officials were at the Canadian border.

That year we came to the

Whalesback Channel from the west end, overlapping the previous year's trip. Again, freight canoes, twenty to forty feet long were in our minds' eyes. Behind every near point or far headland we could imagine one. Meade said that often over three thousand boats had plied the North Channel, from just-melted ice in the spring to re-frozen in the fall.

Six *Serendipity* sisters, including Jan Gougeon's *Spirit* and a second one for Meade, were built in the Gougeons' big boat shed in 2002. Jan's self-taught, prodigious engineering acumen saw the leeboard as a propeller on an axle. Now the axle is a taper in a cone-clutch for friction adjustment. It's a superb system of mounting and control, and easier to build.

Jan, Meade and I went back three times to the northern Great Lakes on four-day fall trips, twice to the Whalesback. In 2005 we stopped eighty miles west in Michigan's Les Chenaux islands, on the Voyageurs route toward Lake Michigan and the Mississippi rather than north to Lake Superior.

From my view, the jollity of the two of them, their staunch 'brotherliness,' and unaware lapses into comic interplay—all made delightful companionship.

In Florida in 2007, the three of us loaded our canoes on the thirty-two foot *Gougmaran*, Meade's efficient

Meade & Bill Ling: Meade replacing a newly-straightened rudder after it was damaged when he beached in waves the previous day. Everglades Challenge 2010





Everglades Challenge 2010 again, right after the rudder was replaced. Meade, in a hurry to recommence sailing, paddles into big waves. So far, so good, but not for much longer?



(Above) Using the paddle in *Walela*, Hugh's wife's *Serendipity* sister, Cedar Key, 2009



WoodWind (& white *Paradox* to starboard, with Dave & Mindy Bolduc)

power catamaran. On a whim, both had bought fishing rods and reels before we left. We motored leisurely and unobtrusively over 200 miles from mid-Florida south to the Everglades, but too fast for trolling for fish.

Meade enjoyed running the boat and watching a new chart plotter, so Jan and I talked, mostly about two boat categories: cruising sailing canoes, and a three to three and a half plywood sheets long, simple version of his Gougeon 32 catamaran from 1990—one of which, *Incognito*, sailed by Russell Brown, was the first solo finisher in this year's Race to Alaska. Jan's imagined ply cat was meant for here—the shallow, mangrove edged waterways behind the Gulf of Mexico's barrier islands—sliding by us at ten knots.

After three days in the 'Glades, Meade's check-in phone call brought a request to come home. We quickly loaded the boats and hurried back at over twelve knots on the Gulf, a mile or two off the long beaches, only coming in for fuel.

In 2008-9, Meade had a curious notion about the three hundred mile 2010 Everglades Challenge. An incidental slab of a light work hull had been in the boat shop. First it became a stand up board from which he thought he might finally learn to fish. He tired of feeding bait to them, though, and added a sail. She became *Yellow Thing*.

Matt Layden, at the 2010 EC start, hadn't seen Meade's difficulty getting off Ft DeSoto beach. It was sunny, northeasterly 'seven to nine' knots. In mid-crossing of Tampa Bay's five mile wide mouth, Meade, with his spinnaker set, overtook Matt. They had a smiling chat; Meade 'was happy', and away he went toward the outside of Anna Maria Island. A steering problem forced him ashore, thirty miles short of Checkpoint One.

The Gougeons built *Hot Canary*, an i550, for the 2011 EC. As with other contestants sometimes, the requisite cushioning for sitting a dozen or two hours isn't appreciated without long sea trials. They suffered, abrading square inches of flesh off their bottoms, but they finished the Challenge in three days, twelve



Meade with *Voyageur*, which he sailed to victory in his class in the Everglades Challenge 2014. Seen here at Checkpoint 1

hours, and seven minutes.

In 2012 Meade entered the EC in the monohull, *WoodWind*, a flat transomed fifteen foot sailing canoe. A thirty knot cold front forced a night's layover for Meade and others at the Sarasota Sailing Squadron, thirty miles down course. At Check

Point One he looked at forecasts, and withdrew from the Challenge.

Jan Gougeon passed away from a recurring lung infection in December of 2012. The 'little brother' was gone, whom Meade had lovingly 'older brothered' since their father died on Christmas Eve of 1955—Meade had

been seventeen and Jan ten years old. Beyond his technical brilliance, Jan grew to be the less impulsive brother, a moderating influence. They were the closest brothers I've known.

Meade entered the 2013 EC in *WoodWind*, equipped with outriggers Jan and he had designed. He sailed valiantly, but a big shore break ended his race. In 2014, *WoodWind's* strip-hull builder, Canadian Skip Izon, built a faster one, *Voyageur*, seventeen feet eight inches. Meade won his class.

He didn't race in 2016, following the diagnosis of melanoma. That year was taken with surgeries, treatments, and recovery. He kept thinking about the next EC, though, and continued his wonderful pattern of developing everything further, from tent and sleeping seat to rigs, foils, amas and connective 'beams'.

In 2017, probability suggested to him the EC was more of a light air race, a paddler's race. He reverted to smaller *WoodWind*, but renamed as *Elderly Care* in honor of Jan's teasing



Family life: granddaughter Olivia steers the *Gougmaran* in Florida, with Meade

phrase for Meade's 'needs.'

After this year's 2017 EC, Meade wanted to do it again, but in *Voyageur*, for her roomier accommodation. He had a new tent made and built a seat to replace the one lost in the EC. And he had a fresh idea for dragging the heavier boat up and down a beach.

In May, during the Cedar Key small boat meet, Meade parked his motorhome here, and I made coffee he'd so enjoyed for nineteen years.

Jan's and Meade's contribution to me has been friendship beyond epoxy, boats and sailing. Wisdom, uncommon kindness, and unparalleled generosity describes them.

Before Meade, I'd imagined developments of cruising sailing canoes, but implementation was

sluggishly incremental. Meade brought vast resources including desire, data, techniques, and access to knowledge. He and Jan developed ideas magnitudes more than I could—and quickly.

After Meade met JF Bedard last November, he called and said JF was an interesting young fellow who probably could help with my languishing 'Clam Girl' skiff design, lofted and modeled in 2013.

Three weeks before his last telephone call, he called about improvements for *Voyageur*. He'd been paddling and was back to his performance of two years before. He wondered about the Clam Girl collaboration, and the planned meeting with JF Bedard and Simon Lewandowski, here in Cedar Key.

He was gravely ill at the time

of his last call, August 21st. It took me several minutes to understand his words, as he breathed with pumped oxygen.

We reminisced most of a half hour. He'd wondered how the Clam Girl meeting went and asked about the short boat ride with JF's young boys.

He asked me to notify our friends, saying doctors thought he might have two months—but it was six days. *HH*

Horton Small Boats
8471 SW CR 347
Cedar Key FL 32625

The final victory: Toby Nipper greets Meade in *Elderly Care* at the end of the Everglades Challenge, March 2017, as he wins his class. This photograph was taken no more than six months before his death

Photograph Hugh Horton



A Short Visit With Douglas Brooks

By Bob Hicks

In early November my friend Capt Gnat tipped me off that Douglas Brooks, builder of Japanese wooden boats and author of a scholarly review of these craft (reviewed in our May 2016 issue), *Japanese Wooden Boat Building*, was at Lowell's Boat Shop in nearby (18 miles away) Amesbury and I should go over and have a look at him building a Japanese Tub Boat. So I did.

Since I was an unannounced drop in and Douglas was hard at work finishing off the tub boat by week's end, I stayed out of his way and, aside from a few questions about what he was doing, just observed. Funny little boat, the simplest way to tell you about it was to let Douglas do so in this short article.

As can be seen from my photos it's indeed a tub, unique in that it is oval shaped with very thick tapered staves, about 1 1/2"x4" (a guess, I didn't measure them). At this stage in its construction it was held together with a couple of tiedown straps in lieu of the traditional 45' long woven bamboo strips Douglas mentions. While I was there, Douglas and Boatshop Director Graham MacKay dropped in the bottom. It settled into place nicely, not quite all the way to the bottom as a shallow bottom edge is left protruding to act as the grounding surface when brought ashore.

Certainly something different for this old New England dory shop, yet a craft with a similar purpose in mind, fishing for a living.

Building the Japanese Tub Boat

By Douglas Brooks

In March of 2000 I was invited to build a Japanese taraibune or "tub boat" in conjunction with the exhibition "Suggestive Curves," which featured boats from around the world. I used northern white cedar for the planking and 50' long madake (timber bamboo) from a commercial farm in Georgia. The boat was built over a ten day period in front of museum visitors.

Taraibune (tub boats) were once found along the Echigo coast of the Sea of Japan and on Sado Island. Now they are used only in six small fishing villages on Sado Island. They have survived to the present because of their low cost and durability. In 1996 I apprenticed with Mr Koichi Fujii, the last man still building these boats. He had originally worked as a cooper building and maintaining giant miso tubs. Only later did he begin building tub boats and I was his only apprentice.

After his death in 1999 I began working with the Kodo Cultural Foundation on a project to document the results of my research and to train a future craftsman. In 2002 I built two taraibune with Mr Takashi Higuchi, a carpenter from Sado Island. In 2003 Kodo published my book, *The Tub Boats of Sado Island; A Japanese Craftsman's Methods in English and Japanese*. Today there is increased interest on Sado to keep the craft of building taraibune alive. In 2007 the Japanese Ministry of Culture (Bunkacho) declaring this craft to be "an important intangible folk cultural asset" and currently the Board of Education on Sado has formed a tub boat preservation society.

Traditional Japanese shaping a plank, pictured in Douglas' book.



Tub boats are made of local sugi (Japanese cedar) and madake (timber bamboo). The construction is the same as Japanese cooping except that the bottom of the tub boat is slightly concave and the boats are oval. The planking is doweled together with bamboo nails but the braided bamboo hoops are what really hold these boats together. The woodworking in a tub boat is not at all beyond the skills of an experienced carpenter, but the braiding of the hoops is now an extremely rare skill. Each hoop is comprised of four 45' long strips of bamboo. The hoops are pounded onto the hull and each must fit precisely since the hull is slightly tapered. Mr Fujii could cut, split and weave three hoops for a boat in less than four hours. He also relied on an obscure zodiac called hasseen which governed when he could cut bamboo.

Taraibune were traditionally used by women on Sado Island. Fishermen use a wooden box with a glass bottom so they can see underwater. They spear a valuable shellfish called sazae and also gather wakame (seaweed) using tub boats. Tub boats are propelled facing forward with a paddle, though in one village the men use outboard motors.

My work is focused on the appreciation and continued use of traditional wooden boats and the preservation and sharing of the skills and knowledge needed to build wooden boats. These include American and English boat types as well as the small boats of Japan. My first chance to build a boat came in 1980 when I was a college student in the Williams-Mystic Maritime Studies Program at Mystic Seaport Museum. As a volunteer in the Seaport shipyard I got to work with Willits Ansel building a replica of a Noank lobster skiff.

After graduation I was able to parlay that knowledge into a job at Stone Boatyard in Alameda, California. A bit later I found a job at San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park where I worked in the museum's Small Boat Shop. In 1990 I left the museum and traveled to Japan. There I met several boat builders, one of whom would later become my first teacher. Since 1990 I have worked independently, building custom boats and designing and directing museum boat building projects. I also began writing about my work and research.

(For more about Douglas' work and his books go to www.douglasbrooksbuiltboats.com)



Douglas installing the bottom in his version.



In retrospect, I'm not exactly sure how it happened. I can only chalk it up to clean living and dumb luck. About every day for the past five years I dreamed of bailing out of my ranch in Barre, Vermont, to find a spot closer to big boating water for my pending retirement. I was making no progress and was getting discouraged. All the logical choices had some great positive attributes but were offset by situations I found troublesome. I diligently filled out a Ben Franklin decision tree but it did not show a clear winner and was of little help. I was like Harris in *Barney Miller* trying to find an apartment and was driving both myself and those around me crazy.

Then suddenly, with little fanfare, I had an epiphany and, as they say in the West, made like horse poop and hit the trail. I packed up the Barre operation and, like a whirling dervish, anchored my fleet headquarters in Morehead City, North Carolina, strictly by happenstance. It all happened at lightning speed but it just seemed right. Normally I get a crippling case of buyer's remorse when I make big decisions or buy anything more expensive than a pizza but I completely escaped its grip on this move, which I consider an extremely good sign.

I lucked into a pretty lush operation. My new HQ fit my budget and has a complete repair facility (shed), drydock (driveway) and logistics center (refrigerator). It's a mere 1.4 miles to the 10th Street boat ramp on the Intracoastal Waterway. The dock is so underutilized I consider it to be virtually my own personal turf.

The Butterfly

By Johnny Mack

The ramp commute and boat dunking ritual takes 18 minutes from the time I leave my driveway to the time I lash the *Bludgeon* up at the pier. Coincidentally, it's also 18 minutes for the flip flop. It's such a short low speed trip that I load up my cooler, stock the larder, top off the tank, twist in the bilge plug and otherwise prep her for launch before I leave the house. There's little left to do at the ramp other than unhook the winch strap and back her in.

It's not quite as nice as having my own personal dock but it's not without merit. I spend less time commuting than I would maintaining waterfront property and I escape the high living expenses that go with such estates. As this area has been known to suffer a hurricane or two, it can also be a good thing to have a little real estate between my home and the main action.

The Intracoastal can be smooth as glass or a windy frothy mess. I don't venture out if the weather report shows more than 10mph winds, waves over 1', any chance of thunder or at the end of the day when yahoos are prone to return home at full attack speed, churning 4' wakes behind them. I also try to not go on weekends or holidays when the boat ramp can have as many as a half dozen rigs in the lot. Such crowds now make me feel uncomfortably rushed. Its fortunate for me that even with those limiting conditions there is still so

much good boating that I would go broke if I went every time those parameters aligned.

To impress everyone I know, I typically tell them I go boating for the altruistic purpose to target polluters, scoop up floating litter or identify some new heretofore undiscovered invasive species and lay a royal noogie on it to stop it dead. But there are times I launch my boat, cruise a half mile to the Ruddy Duck Tavern and enjoy a tasty shrimp burger with a couple of frosty schooners of iced tea. When I feel adventurous and want a more demanding cruise, I'll burn as much as a pint and a half of gas and go east to Beaufort where I've been known to hit Finn's for a 1/3rd pound Carolina burger. I've also clocked up some time on the hour meter and cruised through Core Creek to Oriental for a scone and a cup of mud or headed west to Swansboro for yet more refreshments.

Now you might think all that professionally prepared waterfront fare is expensive and I'm burning through my debauchery budget at an irresponsible pace. Although not too good to be true, I found the area's establishments tend to have reasonable prices for their ilk, above average fare and friendly, attentive staffs. In fact, I've found that I actually save money by increasing my boating and frequenting these higher class hasheries over my boating and sustenance selections of yore. That's because I eliminated nearly all the considerable trailer hauling expense I regularly incurred commuting to Lake Champlain and back to the tune of 14mpg. Its working out pretty good so far and I'm seeing how far I can stretch my cash and extend my boating, lets see, the more times I go boating, the more I save!

The beautiful water in the area is peppered with sandbars and beaches where local rabble rousers anchor to chill out on terra firma. I think there might be just the slightest chance that cold beverages are consumed while said bohemians rot away enjoying the day. I am told it would be very difficult to find a more stress defusing and relaxing way to spend an afternoon.

I was worried how my current boat, the *Bludgeon*, would handle the ocean as she is only a smallish 16' aluminum center console. I know the Intracoastal Waterway and local channels are not considered the ocean by anyone but me, but this is my first experience in the salt and the area can seem pretty darned big, so it's still the ocean to me. I'm still learning about tides, navigational buoys, shifting sand bars, sudden storms, monster wakes, fish that can eat me and troublesome galvanic reactions with salt on aluminum.

I'm delighted to report it's all been good to date. The *Bludgeon* hasn't leaked a drop, is big enough to feel somewhat safe under the controlled conditions I operate her under and she's small enough to go forever on a gallon of gas. The *Bludgeon* has the added merit of being the easiest boat to launch and recover of the dozen or so I have owned. There are some sizable no wake zones that play to her strengths as there is no advantage to having a quintuplet of 750hp Marine 7 motors when cruising through them.



One of the larger rigs stopping at Morehead City.



Cruisers lined up at Beaufort.

Morehead City waterfront as seen from Atlantic Beach.



I have to admit though, when I get into the sound or cut through the inlet and see big wakes coming at me like bullets out of a machine gun, or see breakers like the Bon-zai Pipeline cresting in the distance, that I get a crippling case of two, four, six, eight and even ten footitis. A more capable craft would enable me to double or triple the boating I can do but then fuel and refreshment costs would exponentially increase, so to maintain my high living standard I could end up boating less than I do now. It can be very stressful planning for the right boat!

I did get my revenge though, as I oft like to do. I broke my cardinal rule and went boating on Labor Day. It was a beautiful gentle afternoon but I got bombed time after time by the monster wakes of high power poorly trimmed Barcolounger cruisers. They were flying and turning a lot of fuel into pure wake energy. One jackwagon in particular zipped by me about six times. I recognized the culprit as it had three 350hp motors jutting off the craft's ample rear end. I returned to the waterfront area to seek refuge in the no wake zone only to spy my nemesis at the fuel dock with a dour look on his face.

I was going to be an ass and load my emergency 3gal tank on the dock and loudly (but politely) ask the attendant to fill 'er up. I would then grouse about how quick I'd burned through that \$10 as the fuel probably wouldn't last me the week of steady boating. I didn't do it as I'm the only one who finds it funny but I think those thoughts when the aforementioned jabronie and those of his ilk nearly knock the fillings out of my teeth. I've heard folks say that gas expense doesn't matter to anyone who can afford such boats, I don't know if I believe that.

I have a new project. I saved a 24.5' that is actually a 21.5' (sans motor mount) 1957 aluminum Lone Star Cruisemaster from the scrapper in a junk yard. Hence her name, *The Butterfly*. I'm going to have to spin some serious yarn to twist her from the big ugly bug she was when I found her into the beautiful brocruiser I see in my mind. At any rate, I think she has the lines of a PT boat and she makes me think of Ernest McHale, *Tinkerbelle* and Mr Parker at the helm cracking open some cold ones with a church key, foam and suds flying everywhere.

Lonestar Cruisemaster coming at you.



Maritime Museum on Beaufort waterfront.



A large tanker with all kinds of piping and peppered with no smoking signs at Morehead City.



Lonestar Cruisemaster pulling away.

I had some success with the previous boats I rejuvenated and even bragged that I could take an aluminum boat completely apart to the last rivet and piece it back together again leak free. I am not so smug now. A little bit of me thinks I bit off more than I can chew. Ah well, she will or she won't, she do or she don't.

If I can't get her up to snuff for the righteous jaw dropping cruiser my public has come to expect, my fallback plan is to hang a very inexpensive small used two stroke on her and dedicate her strictly to Christmas Flo-tilla duty. There is enough real estate on her to make a prodigious light show. My initial thought would be to nail a frame on her in the shape of a holiday model train locomotive outlined with rope lights and chasing LED's on the wheels and flashing smoke belching out the stack. Then again, maybe an extra large rendition of a vintage Buddy L dump truck with motion lights showing the dump body raising and a load of presents sliding out the back would be better. Who knows.

If I can make her watertight and get full confidence in her structure, I would like to twist her into a prodigious brocruiser to ply the ICW. I would like to cruise north to Lake Champlain to see my friend Bill Moulton at Bill's Boat Yard in Vermont or cruise south to Florida to clean out Dave Lucas's refreshment locker at the Tiki Hut. Dan Rogers is safe only due to the geographical isolation, and frigid temperatures.

To answer the question that I'm sure pops into everyone's mind, yes, I resolved the refrigerator problem I had with the *Hildegard Reinheffer*. I picked up a small inverter generator that can not only push a small refrigerator to the max but can also run a microwave, hot plate, fan, small AC and coffee pot, if not at the same time. Thinking she'll be a comfortable cruiser.

I will need a motor for the poor girl if she passes the hull integrity test. She has a prodigious transom bracket that can handle a pretty powerful pair of perfectly pleasingly plump pouting pointy purring performers. I got ahead of myself and found I spent a lot of time looking for motors before I so much as dunked her to see if she even floats. Modern fuel injected outboards are pretty darned easy motors to live with and have developed impressive reputations for reliability. A single mid sized motor would be sufficient to push the boat and looks to be my cheapest option. Still, I can't be a shnook because you know its not how she'll run, but how she'll look.

To my regret, or relief, I passed on a very nice craigslist package of a set of reportedly good working Fisher Price 55hp four stroke Bearcat motors from the '60s. I couldn't help but think how cool I would look pulling into the Ruddy Duck with those fine vintage units smoothly gurgling away. For better or worse though, I feared any cachet I would gain by such a setup would be for naught as the reality of owning 50-year-old motors contaminated my thinking. The picture that formed in my head was of me, bent over those motors, in a plumber's pose, trying to get them started in front of a bevy of comely giggling tourist women having a fun time at my expense. That and the thought of those old cast iron cooling channels in salt water makes me shake like a Chihuahua pooping a peach pit.

As far as the Cruisemaster's cosmetics go, I'm undecided if I want to soda blast her, which would give an industrial steampunk motif, or paint her in a PT Boatesque camouflage pattern. The old girl has her share of dents and dings and might look best with a little make up. Of course, I could do the number one thing to do in aluminum boat repair when there is a cosmetic problem. Rivet a patch over blemish, do the same on the other side in a mirror image and call it an upgrade.

My paint option is to just sand a layer or two of the old stuff off, nail down a color scheme and roll it on. She almost has the size and lines where she would really hang with a razzle dazzle WWI battleship pattern, but I am thinking a more modern geometric or digital camo design might have broader appeal. That dazzle stuff is such a strong statement it might work against me if not done exactly right. Either way, I am not beyond using bright colors instead of subdued flat camo hues, sort of like the jeeps in *Jurassic Park It Here*. She will, of course, have the proper shark's teeth on the front to scare little children. Little girl children especially.

The previous owner replaced the floor with Trex decking. I thought I put one over on him as that stuff is expensive. After I removed a board to check the nether regions I realized that stuff isn't as good for a boat deck as I thought it would be. It is extremely heavy and has no structural rigidity. I yanked it up and plan on reworking the deck with good old fashioned PT plywood.

The cabin was lined with what is the 60-year-old equivalent of lauan. It actually looked to be in pretty good shape so I thought I could ever so gently remove one panel to inspect what lay below and reinstall it. The piece I took off was just a tad bit moldy on the underside. I thought that to be discouraging as it left me with little choice but to crack the top off about three Reingold Extra Dry's and get jiggy with it. Out it came but in my haste, I destroyed large runs of aluminum trim and will have to go through the extra work to make a suitable transmogrified replacement of some form or another that

hasn't been seen or even thought of before. I also destroyed the paneling and have no pieces big enough for suitable patterns as I hoped. That part of my plan is off to a poor start but how bad can it be?

Sandwiched between the paneling and the outer hull was a substantial amount of styrofoam. It was dry but musty and stained in places. I am thinking that needs to go, too, but I am chewing on it for a bit. I'd like to save time and money by re using it but don't want anything with even a hint of mold on it in the confined areas where I'll rack out.

One thing I like about this rig is the way the ribs were designed. It's the only aluminum boat I have owned that has a drain channel down the centerline of the hull big enough to do its job without getting clogged by anything bigger than a grain of rice. Believe it or not, some of the boats I have owned actually got splash water and rain accumulation in them. Without a good drain channel the stuff stays in there, sloshes around forever and gets quite nasty in the process.



Cruisemaster ribs.

There was a head of sorts in the cabin. It's sort of like a Swedish Electric Composting toilet, but without the Swedish, electric or composting parts. Actually, it's little more than a bucket in an enclosure. But there are several patches in the hulls at this location that are telling of her history. It was not too long ago that the thought of holding tanks in a recreational boat was just a joke. This was of course before the common implementation of 5gal holding tanks that manufacturers try to pass off today as being an elegant and fully satisfactory solution that, according to their engineers, can easily handle a party of six women on a week long margarita cruise. Like many vintage things, the old poop plumbing methods were much simpler than today's convoluted efforts. But I'm thinking in this case that waterfront property owners, swimmers and fishermen don't miss those good old days a bit.

Cruisemaster old style plumbing.



Procuring a boat in a junkyard is a good indication that she's a leaker. In a month or two I hope to dunk her to learn exactly how many leaks she has, how bad they are and if I can access them. The question is, if I can identify and repair them for less money that it costs to find a suitable candidate in leak free condition. I'm actually pensive about this part of the process as I fear the answer.

If only there was a magic rubbery compound, maybe in a spray can, that would seal her right up. What a crock. I was also delighted to see the inside of the hull was not slathered with the latest NASA miracle epoxy or 20 gallons of roofing tar or splattered with a half-assed welding job.

'Tis true, those attempts can temporarily stop a leak but so can library paste and a 1" piece of masking tape. The reality is though, they do nothing to hold the boat together, which in my opinion is a mighty important function of the oft unheralded rivet. Those inadequate repair attempts can be such a bear to remove to do the job correctly that I would never knowingly buy a boat that endured such harsh treatment.




Previous unsuccessful repairs.

Fact is, if a leaky aluminum boat is to be repaired correctly, the only way is to stick to old school methods and Dan Rogers some of the suspect rivets into submission and Dave Lucas the rest. Which means they need to be rebucked or drilled out and replaced. I've had good results using stainless bolts in areas I can get a wrench to and blind closed end rivets in locations I can't.

And like in all boat builds, just when I feel on top of it and I'm rounding the bend to completion, I remember a thousand things I overlooked. In this case, the wood in the transom is a bit vermiculite-ey. So, as in my opinion that is a somewhat important part of the boat, I made a plan to start a process to get a consortium together to examine it in detail, to write up a work order and give some thought to putting her on the schedule. Yuck. I really don't want to do it as it looks like a pain in the ... with that ginormous twin motor bracket et al. Thinking this just might be worth pulling the old Tom Sawyer gag on some unsuspecting acquaintances with strongbacks and see what happens. Wish me luck.

She'll be in the build phase for some time and I'd like to hear any suggestions on completing her. In addition to her finish, I am interested in adding a swim ladder, hard top and a bike rack. Any leads to target a suitable low cost fuel stingy power plant would also be appreciated. I would also like to know if anyone has had any successful info for switching the standard outboard shift, throttle and steering rigging to a purely electrical fly by wire system. I would like to swap a remotely operated motor between my many boats and that would make it much easier.

I can be reached at johnmcintyre321@msn.com.



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I'll start with an invitation I received from my dear friend Richard Honan, he must be a dear friend if he wants me to come up to Boston in February and join his crew for the Snow TRow. He says don't forget my boots. The two intrepid rowers in this banner are Richard and his brother out for a day on the water, or in this case the ice. As I sit here looking at this I'm trying to imagine something I would rather do less and can't come up with anything, and these two do it every year. It must be one of those Yankee things I don't understand.



Queen Anne continues to creep along. I had to get some of the framing in so I can see where interior things go. I design on the fly as you know, putting lines on paper means nothing to me, I have to see it three dimensional to see if it really works and a lot of the time it doesn't work the way I thought it would. This helm chair is a prime example, I'm playing with the height and position, but before I can finalize that I have to know the height of the forward cabin top and the exact location and angle of the dash and where the wheel and stuff will go. There's a lot of things to figure out on a boat that's really a floating house, that's the fun of it.



I took John to Advantage Lumber, the worlds biggest hardwood lumber yard, and ended up with a piece of purple heart lumber. It's 10" wide, 16' long and 1 1/4" thick for \$125. I probably don't need it but it's really great wood.



From the Tiki Hut

By Dave Lucas

We took out the fan and put the stove in the Tiki Hut this week in hopes that we'll get some cool weather to use it. We have fired it up a couple of times, the dogs love it as much as we do. We've been using some of the oak that the hurricane took down, it burns pretty good if we have enough lighter wood, and we do. This pile is some of the trees that came down and they were all cut up using two of these 56v battery powered chain saws. The damn things are impressive, they have enough power to cut through this big oak, some 2' in diameter without bogging down at all. It goes when you pull the trigger and has instant torque. The battery will last through about 15 of the bigger trunks and they charge up in about half an hour. There are three other big piles of logs and limbs.



I ordered a load of pea gravel and it came in a giant 18 cubic yard dump truck. I got a little Bobcat and spread it where the hurricane rains had washed out things. I asked everyone who saw it to guess how much it weighs and told them that they wouldn't get within 10,000lbs of guessing it. Even with that hint most said between 6,000 and 10,000lbs which is not even within 20,000lbs of it, the pile weighs 38,600lbs.

Stan's *Nancy's China* came back to the shop for some maintenance work. He changed the cabin from the plans to his requirements and uses one of our Melonseed sails (a stock Beetle Cat sail) to make it go. Stan is good with boats but terrible with boat trailers. He manages to find the worse pieces of junk and tries to fix them up using duct tape and bailing wire and they usually fall apart coming down the road. It's a thing with him that he just can't buy a new trailer. Talented but weird.



If he doesn't watch it, Richard is going to finish his SCAMP and have to find some other excuse to come out to the shop. He's always welcome to just sit around and play his sax for us. More talent I don't have. I need to come up with a talent that I'm uniquely qualified for, does being a bossy pain in the ass count?

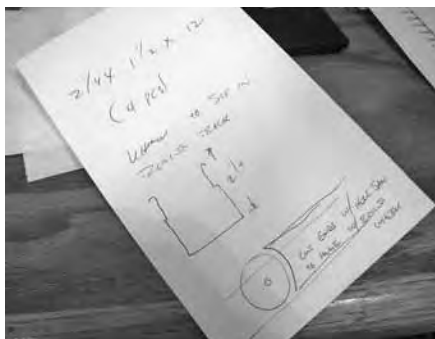


Howard's *Big Ben* garvey and my custom commuter at the floating dock. Both have Mercury 60s for power, mine will do about 25mph easily but Howard's is scary fast. It's half the weight, has a little flatter bottom and gets up out of the water with air and foam between it's twin skegs. I revel in breaking boats but I didn't have the nerve to push this one up to full throttle of about 6,500rpm. It was doing about 35mph at 5,500 and I could just see me and the dogs flying up in the air like one of those racing hydroplanes if I pushed it all the way up.



And Then Like a Bolt Outa' the Blue!

It was during a slovenly Sunday morning staff meeting that somebody from one of the departments here at Frankenwerke drifted in while I was soaking my banged up fingers in the hot wax tub. He was grouching about how the bottom of *Miss Kathleen's* keel looked all scarred up from bouncing along the exposed metal edges of the keel roller track. Before anybody knew what was up, I was out there in the shop in my bathrobe and slippers grabbing frantically at the leftover plastic stuff pile. We visual guys have to have it in front of us to be able to really figure stuff out.



I found some 1"x2" chunks of HDPE from some now extinct project and continued to feverishly fondle 'em into the track.



Suddenly there was a full blown staff meeting convened. All "we" had to do was run over to the lumberyard as soon as they opened and get some more of those galvanized mending plates for shims and do some counterboring and extending and messing around. Things were rapidly spinning outta control like always around here.

A sober voice from someplace in the back rows said, ever so faintly, "What if you just go ahead with today's sked? What if you just go ahead and paint this beast and go to the plastics store in the Big City tomorrow morning. Get those plastics guys to cut some parts to size? What if you don't spend all day and several trips to town to make these too narrow and too short pieces work?"

Wow, huh? Sobriety of thought on an early Sunday morning. Maybe not such a bad idea to go with a really whizbang cool idea. We'll see how that works out. I'll let you know.

Jamie Says,
"Dad, It's Time for a Boat Trip"



The View from Almost Canada by Dan Rogers

I couldn't agree more. This trailer saga has burned through some of the last of our Indian summer. October came this morning. Today was "hair and makeup" for *Mr. Tom*. Tomorrow should be new shoes. Then it'll be Show Time.



Five rattle cans of Rustoleum Regal Red and a half gallon of the hardware store's very best exterior latex, got us a 30-yard first coat paint job.



Considering all the nooks and crannies, that's a lot of painting, mostly a lot of bending and stooping and leaning over. But *Mr. Tom* is one big fella so just about everything about this project has become rather outsized. And then, after I painted everything I covered the most of it up with carpet. Dunno if we need more or less. I've done my best to visualize the angles and weights and thrusting that boat is gonna put on her cradle. What's gonna go thump in the night when we are working with a side wind or a too steep or too shallow ramp someplace? Well, that's why tomorrow should be Show Time, time to find some of this stuff out.



Whew

I took a little break from knuckle busting and gave *Mr. Tom* a chance to strut his stuff. Always a moment when I have to remember to breathe. So much of this stuff is done by the Shade Tree Mechanics' School Method. While class is always in session some of those lessons need to be relearned at the most unexpected and inconvenient times. Like "Will it fit? 101."



And "Where's the balance point? graduate level seminars."



Stuff mounted on top needs to migrate to the bottom and vice versa. Rollers have to find a place to ride amicably with everybody else. Stuff yet to do. Lights. Tires. Hubs. Stuff.

But everybody made it this far, time to work on other things, for a bit. Whew!



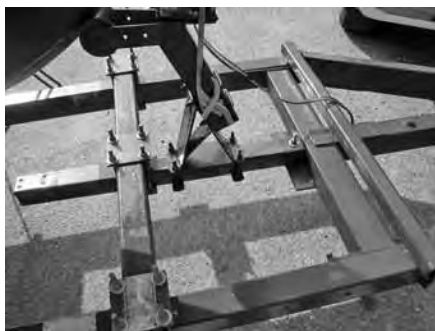
If You Can't Laugh at Yourself, Somebody Else Will

I really was done with this trailer project. Close enough, at least except for everything else. Like the Lucas said, "When you're 90% done, you've only got 90% to go." But Dave never said anything about new stuff breaking, too. A couple weeks ago, I had a "road hazard" event while towing *Miss Kathleen* across one of our mountain passes. The factory multi plug unit was ripped bodily from its perch under the back bumper by some sort of missile. I sort of put the demolished plug unit back together after it got blasted apart by flying debris. Figured it would last that way until I got round tuit.

Today was pretty round. I had to take the loaded trailer "across state lines" to the tire store to get the proper tire and wheel size swapped for the ones I bought the day before, with putatively accurate nomenclature. Not quite. That meant I had to rig lights and find a license and all that falderal. I stopped at the top of our hill to just check. Nuttin'. Wiggle, nuttin'. Pull apart, put back, nuttin'. WD-40 and spit, nuttin'. And so I backed down the hill and got the electrical kit out. It's not like 12vdc lights should be any real mystery. It was two hours later and all I had was one set of "extra" lights working. So.



Back up the hill and another stop at the top just to check. Again, nuttin'. Again, another half hour and under way for the tire store. I decided the back way would be the most prudent and stopped again in front of the volunteer fire department. Nuttin'. Again it seems the winch mast didn't get tightened the last time I had it apart. Sheesh, no wonder, everything seemed to be rocking and rolling back there.



Of course, the proper deep socket was hanging in its accustomed place back in the shop at home. So were all of my $\frac{3}{4}$ " box and open end wrenches. Starting to feel a bit silly. Made a shallow socket work by sort of half engaging both the ratchet handle and sort of half engaging the nut. A great method to flatten my knuckles, I hasten to add. Another quick check on those trailer lights. Nuttin'. Again.

Took all afternoon to go to the tire store. Somehow my 8-ply, 225/55R15s, sitting on 15" wheels with 5" on $4\frac{1}{2}$ " and 6" positive offset are not all the same. Some are 6" wide, some 7". That changes enough aspects of these tires to want them all to be the same. And who woulda known? 7" wide trailer wheels are a special order item hereabouts.

Every day is an adventure, every day an education.

Stare at Something Long Enough and You Might Begin to See It

The "finishing touches" on this trailer marathon have begun to cloy a bit. I think I've spent the better part of three days crawling under that heavily laden lattice work of steel beams. It's not that I'm looking for a shady spot for a noonday nap or anything like that, more a matter of close but no cigar. Considering how far we've come, things are looking pretty good but the boat just don't wanna slide on and off without getting crooked. The geometries are just plain complicated. Yes, had I kept a couple of sets of articulated rollers from a couple of now forgotten trailer projects I would have been done a week ago. Those babies just wiggle and squirm on demand, the exotic dancers of the trailer world perhaps. But no. I had to try something new and innovative and that's been the trouble.

Speaking of geometry, this whole caboodle has to do with something my high school geometry teacher, Mr Robertson, was probably talking about while I was sketching boats on the inner cover of my Peaches notebook in the back row. I think it's about that thing called a "tangent to an arc." Anyhow, there's another geometric stumbling block here, something I'll call a "constant curve with a variable radius." So here I sit, 55 years later, wishing I'd paid just a little better attention back in geometry class.

I did try a conventional solution, I put a couple of those stikeeuppee guides on both sides to try and get *Miss Kathleen* to line up on the centerline rollers. Seems to work for JimBob and the metal-flake bassboat contingent, didn't work for me worth even half a hoot. *MK* is just too heavy and rounded, I suspect.



The next Bright Idea was to improve upon the keel guide setup that had morphed and metastasized and not ever really worked all that well. I've been going and coming back and forth to the launch ramp every couple of hours this past triumvirate of days. There's a bunch of tradeoffs involved, but simply, get it too close and things get jammed, too far away and things go awry. Just right is very elusive depending upon ramp angle, trailer depth and I think barometric pressure or the current price of hog belly futures must have something to do with it.



Of course, the Engineering Department here at Frankenwerke seems to have all taken the week off, just me and the ghost of M Robertson are the only ones willing to crawl into those just about impossible spots under the boat and trailer to work on those n'arcs and radishes. But every time we put in and haul out the boat ends up farther aft on the trailer. Yep, there is a law of diminishing returns thing operating here.

At first I tried to follow the example of our august Senators and Congressmen/women. Every time the boat was too far back, I just moved the winch stand to match. Near as I can tell that idea only works in DC. Certainly the laws of supply and demand out here in Almost-Canada would indicate that the demand for more trailer will outstrip the supply.

The whole problem has to do with floating the boat on and off the bunks and rollers. Yeah, I know, if only I had put in those articulated roller arms it would be fait accompli. But winter's just around the corner, the launch ramp gets locked up in only a few days. I need a workable solution and, like everybody knows, a short cut really SHOULD work. So, we keep trying essentially the same thing, earnestly hoping for a different result.

So there I was holding the morning staff meeting out in the driveway. The moon was still up, the sun not so much. Still below freezing out there. There I stood in my bathrobe and slippers, just staring vacantly at that frosty trailer. And then another Bright Idea emerged, same parts, same nuts and bolts, different arrangement.

Worth a shot. I got dressed and went out there to giv'er a try, this without any help from any Real Engineers. By high noon I was able to erase a couple of things from the TODO list and since most of the Real Engineers of my acquaintance would likely just be getting to work by noon, I guess doing it the hard way wasn't all that unreasonable. Actually, this job has required me to think like a watchmaker and behave like a stevedore. This rearrangement of heavy stuff took a bit of groaning and cussing but then almost nothing worth doing can be done without that.

The whole effort was to get the winch to pull up instead of down when bringing the boat the last 6" onto the trailer. So, anyhow, everything got taken apart and moved and rebolted and moved again and rebolted again and it still wasn't going to work worth a peewaddle.



All along the biggest impediment to my happiness on this project has been the need for the tow strap to pull at a changing angle THROUGH the very thing that stops the hull from moving forward when reaching that Everest-like summit. I tried this and tried that, dragged a pile of odd bits and wonder-what stuff out and then, like a tortoise track snaking across the desert at sunset, it finally dawned on me, one of those simple but elegant solutions. And that, my friend, is the essence of that geometry problem of the tangent to an arc with the variable radius. Wow, I think Mr Robertson might have given me extra credit, he might have even upgraded my final grade from a "Gentleman's D."



The whole effort seems to look promising now. Still gotta deal with brakes and fenders and wiring but that stuff is pretty much old hat around here. In fact, even with all that tryfer stuff under the hull still not really "permanent," we managed to back into a rather stiff side wind. And only rotated about an inch off of center.



So yes, I think we're getting there, tangentially speaking.

He's Still At It

In fact, I was right there when it happened. The entire night shift crew just up and quit. It was only about 2100, still a couple of hours of planned work left in the day. Everybody just walked off the job. Hard to figure, but true enough and here it is, almost 0530 the next day. Nobody has shown up for work yet. Stuff scattered around, tools piled up, nobody working. Just plain shameful. Nothing but excuses.



First excuse and I was there, too, so I have to agree. I decided that crawling under this mongolious trailer with the boat on it and laying under all that on the cold pavement outside was just not as much fun as it used to be. So we went down to the ramp and headed for Lon and Kathy's place to leave *Miss Kathleen* overnight again. There was a grand total of ONLY TWO boats out yesterday morning, one apparently for pleasure, the other one for necessity.

A significant part of working alone is not having anybody available to handle lines. Most of the time I let the boat swing back on the lines in a fairly repeatable trajectory while I put the truck and trailer in a parking stall. Usually works out OK. Not yesterday, wind was gusty and did I mention COLD? Mostly I just have to get the creaking joints to hobble faster when it's like this. And after a short motoring off to weather we were situated, well at least more or less ready to get to work.



Note the paucity of other people and boats. Certainly, wherever they all are, it is warmer. Anyhow, the mess that night crew left did result in some stuff getting done.



There's a partial catwalk bolted up for standing on when hooking up the winch strap without (hopefully) having to wade out to do the deed. It's hanging from a new cross support that will have a "chin roller" mounted just as soon as the boat can be got back aboard to fit it.



And I see from this shot that somebody has been toying with a second winch to tension the boat into the bow chock when on the trailer. An interesting idea. Wonder who is working on such a thing when the skedboard specifically says, "#1. Get wiring run and get boat back on trailer?"



I see that there is another new cross support bolted in and painted up to disguise the sloppy workmanship. There's a new keel crib set on an adjustable mount to (hopefully) get that 3,000lb boat properly lined up on the trailer. Not a completely done deal, it seems. And at the heart of that crib is a set of rollers the keel will actually stand on. It sits at an up angle of about 5° to (hopefully) assist in the comings and goings. The white thingies between the rollers are chunks of high dollar UHMW that stand proud of the metal channel mounting thingie by just enough to carry most of the weight the hard rubber rollers are advertised to be able to carry. I have already discarded a couple of those guys from their heroic work in similar circumstances on the old trailer. And then there is that winch stand.



At this moment the Harbor Freight winch is actually lifting the hull by about $\frac{6}{10}$ of a foot until we haul out of the water and let gravity take over from flotation on *MK's* hindquarters. We have already broken that winch strap repeatedly. I'm really hoping this roller bracket will offer some mechanical advantage. Talk about reinventing the wheel. Can't proceed on that one without the boat in place so I'm wondering why that night crew left this stuff strewn around. Some sort of a mutiny, maybe?



Then there is this business of putting fenders on a somewhat crinkled fender mount. The original EZ Loader box fenders were not only badly mauled from their prior job as stikeeoutees on a hay trailer, they are too small to fit the mondo tires *TD* now sports. In the interest of time and expense somebody came up with the hairball notion that it would be OK to use the remains of a sheet of $\frac{1}{2}$ " MDO and just manufacture a fender thingie. I'm pretty sure whoever that was also intended to add some sort of trim pieces. I think that's supposed to happen after the wires get run.



I'm also told that those cute little periscopes at the back ends of the fenders were supposed to guide the boat onto the keel crib. Seems the pole extensions just bent over and didn't really serve that purpose. Now I think

they are still there to both hold up the fenders and to serve as depth gauges in backing in for launch/recovery. I also think there is supposed to be some sort of tall/narrow LED taillight hung up on these periscope thingies. Wonder how that's gonna work out?

If that night crew would just quit with the excuses and clean up their messes from all that drilling and bolting and finger smashing and get those wires run.



Well, maybe we could get back to that skedboard, maybe even bring that boat home before it snows. Boy, howdy! Them guys are sure messy, tired, too, I suppose.



Waiting for Godot

Remember how in that sorta counter cultural one act play by Samuel Beckett those two guys sit and muse ad nauseam about how things are simply going to get better around there when this guy, Godot, finally shows up? Well, unlike the play, Mr G finally showed up right here at Frankenwerke. I guess that you could say that he's not such a big wheel. But he does keep things centered and that, my friends, is what we've been waiting for.



At long last I think we can now figure out how to get *Miss Kathleen* on and off of *Mr. Tom's* back without sliding akimbo. It's about as simple as this.



And then, this.



No doubt when those engineering types take a look at this simple but elegant setup they'll want to add sides or more rollers or something. Heck, I've already heard mutterings. We've been waiting weeks for this little fellow to show up, maybe via the north pole or someplace. I'm pretty happy with how things are shaping up and, besides, them engineers hardly ever show up for work on time. Who needs 'em?

Speaking of tech support, I got a couple of friendly reminders today. Tom, who does flawless welding and machine work, reminded me about how UHMW, what they call the "natural" version, gets melanoma real fast when left out in the sun. I actually know better. I reasoned that those blocks under *MK's* keel will normally be hiding from the sun. But he's absolutely right, the purpose of a boat trailer is to be unladen. That's why we tow 'em places. I slapped on a coat of sunscreen and decided to leave it as is. But Tom, you are right, it's one of those "inconvenient truths" some of us try to ignore sometimes. My solution wouldn't make it for a nanosecond in Tom's shop.

I have been whining about breaking winch straps, especially before Godot finally showed up. Steve, who has made a study of these things, suggested that I use a hunk of Dyneema. I actually have a chunk of that stuff. Would it be a really lowdown silly excuse to say that I don't know how to tie a Brummel splice in that stuff? OK, you're right, Steve, I should simply delegate that little task, get one of those lazy layabouts on the crew to become the Lead Brummelier. Then he could teach all the rest of us on Training Days. Getting right on that.



We're actually still watching the driveway for the next long awaited delivery, the lights. Wires are pulled and twisted and looped.



Ends are waiting for pigtails. We're finally ready to deliver some of them 'trons on down the line, just need some devices to use 'em. And just about as fast as you can say "co valent energy shell," I just about messed the whole thing up this morning. We've been down to the water and in out in out several times already since the temperature finally bubbled up from 26°F. We've already trudged up that long, long hill to retrieve *MK* from her borrowed slip.



This is only partway up that hill but still it's hard to lay much blame on altitude sickness or even frostbite and my particular faux pax was soooooo egregious that I didn't even take pictures. Somehow, in the hundreds and hundreds of launchings *MK* and I have performed, I have NEVER DONE THIS, not even once.

In my haste to get the boat back on the trailer and supervise the sideslew and the other gyrations that may or may not occur, I left the boat tied (rather securely) to the dock. No big deal, you hasten to add? Well, she was also strapped into the trailer. Yep. I dunno'er. It wasn't until the truck wheels spun a bit on the sand that I understood how my science experiment was spinning outta control. Children, don't try this at home! So anyhow, that's my True Confession for today. Just kinda keep that one under your hat, OK?

So we're back in the driveway, still stuff to do, but I think I'll have to thaw out the fingers and toes first.



Coming to a Launch Ramp Near You

We didn't exactly get done but we did manage to get cold, tired and sore and a touch hungry. I guess when you make it up as you go along there will always be something that still needs to be changed or bent or drilled or bashed with a sore elbow. Always something. But we got lights! Not all of 'em but we got quite a many.



And this time, I did try to learn something from past troubles. I went up a couple of wire sizes, for an example, and instead of running the main supply and ground wires all the way aft to the tail lights and then feeding on back towards the front (there is actually a logical reason for this), I wired it like a house this time. There are bazillion joints along the way but all of those connections are visible from the outside. The wire runs were shielded from harm as much as possible but every connection is butt connected, taped and secured next to the light served before passing on aft. That way it'll be like a string of Christmas lights, everything "downstream" from the one that's out will also be out. Maybe for once, I can "simply" go to the corroded, broken or just finicky connection and get things back on the road.

There will be some j-boxes that have to be invented to put the fixtures on top of and corral the connections. There will be some

split plastic pipe chases to add here and there for mechanical protection. And I do have an auxiliary set of lights that hangs on the stern rail and are fed from a plug at the forward end of the trailer. Anybody who has launched a boat without taking in all the wire connections first will implicitly understand why this particular lead goes all the way up to the winch stand to be connected. Certainly I can't be the only one?



So anyway. I think it's time to pinch my fingers and get my toes cold in a different pursuit. Head 'em out!

Can Nothing Be Simple?

The nice lady at the county license place knows me by name. I probably provide some sort of iconoclastic comic relief. Let's just figure that most folks come in to license stuff that somebody in a factory put a number on. Let's, just for the sake for argument, figure that particular number is in the correct format and actually matches one of those lists that she can pop up on that computer screen. Then, in I come. She smiles and says something, like, "Well, what did you create this time, Dan?"

Sometimes it's just too hard. This time the jury's still out. At the moment *Mr. Tom* is living in sin. He ain't got no papers. He's gotta get inspected. They do that by appointment. Ours is in December. Wonder what they think we're gonna do without a birth certificate in the meantime.

I had to get him weighed at a certified public scale, one that prints out a certificate. There's this place the log trucks and the chip trucks run across over by AJs Café just over the state line in Idaho. In fact, I run across to it now and then to check on stuff. That's how I knew that the Old Trailer was way overloaded. I usually use that scale only when the Real Guys aren't trying to make a living and most of those times the little scale house isn't open.

I called Jim, who works for the Stimson Lumber Company that owns the scale and asked him to find out how a "civilian" could get a trailer weighed and certificated. Long story short, I needed to go talk to the nice lady at the office. I drove on across the bridge and parked in all the guest parking spots with my wagon train.

She explained the procedure and averred that "even I should be able to do it." I guess I understand what she meant. But it's not completely that simple. This weight is the weight of the trailer without the boat on it. The boat weighs a ton and a half. I can't just put it in

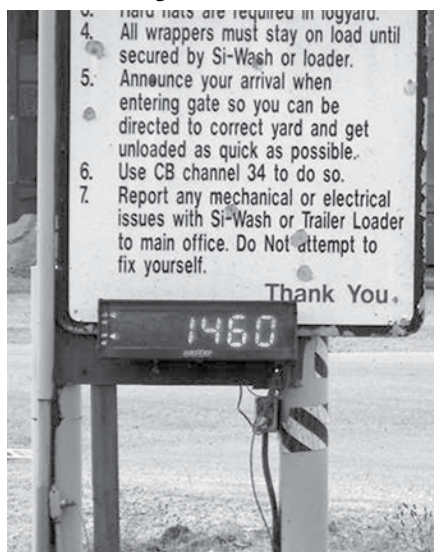
my pocket so I also need a place to park *Miss Kathleen* while getting the trailer weighed. It's that time of year when the dam is open and the river's dropping like a stone. A complication, but not a deal breaker.



I needed to see if the replacement "chin-roller" that I made out of several other rubber rollers that I cut with a hand saw to replace the store bought one that fell out on its first mission and left a series of gouges in the hull, was gonna work anyway. So in we went. And away to the scales we went.



So far. So good.



Only one or two big rigs lined up behind me. All I gotta do is go in the little house and push a few buttons. Piece a' cake. No problem. Comin' right up. Most scratch-ee. Be outta you guys' way in a sec.

Let's see now, the nice lady said, all I hadda do was push the "print" button. Hmmmm, oh, yeah, there is that little bugger. "Print." "Whirr, klunk." I went over to the inkjet printer around the corner. Nuthin'. Back to the touch screen. "Print, whirr, klunk." Back to the printer. Nuthin'. After a couple more of these fruitless button punchings, I pulled on ahead, parked and came back to see how the Real Guys do it. "Nuthin' to it, bud." "Whirr, klunk." Ahhhhhh. Oh, you get your ticket from THAT little printer on the wall. Ahhhhhh. Like the nice lady said, even I should be able to do this without too much trouble. You'd think so, huh?

Well, let's see. How does one lick his wounds when he has a boat already in the water. It ain't raining yet. The fall colors are in full profusion and nobody else is around.



Yep. Some things I do know how to do. But this time of year we never know if one more time will be the last time.

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I had already realized that there was some sort of a mutually beneficial dynamic taking place between the O'Day Mariner and *Dancing Chicken*. However, I don't think I had realized to what degree.

Meanwhile, I was experiencing a certain amount of disquiet due to the fact that the actual building of *Dancing Chicken* had not been physically taking place during the construction of her "nest." Then, for one thing, I reflected upon that saying I quoted before from "Sallowpad the Raven." In "The Horse and His Boy" (*Chronicles of Narnia*, C.S. Lewis, 1949) he is heard quoting one of the old, wise sayings of his people, "Nests before eggs." The thought naturally also crossed my mind that the maintenance of the well being of the builder could have a positive effect on the build as well (and this is now my nest too)!

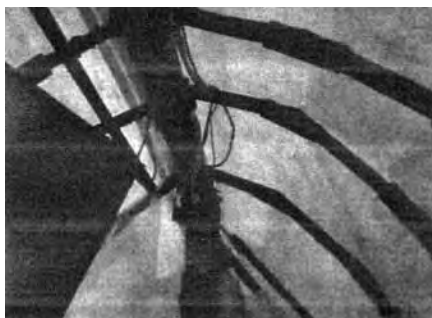
Then one of the guys I chat with at the church potluck, who is also a subscriber to *Messing About in Boats*, said that he, and he figured many if not most of the readers, considered the peripherals to be part of the fun. I found that very reassuring. Pursuant to these above factors, here is a photo of one of the aforementioned peripherals with which I am especially tickled. It's a shot of the interior of the cockpit cover

Dancing Chicken

By Gloria Sadler Burge

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A MiniSaga in (?) Parts Part XII



In the process of all this I noticed yet another of those very interesting things across which I frequently seem to be coming recently. The way in which that reciprocity to which I was referring earlier is unfolding is turning out to be even more congruent than I had realized, since not only am I developing a design for the boat in the process of working on the arches for the cockpit cover, but also I just realized that they're it!

Here's what I mean by that. I know, you've probably already seen these next three pictures at least once, but I'm inserting them here because there's something else I noticed about them, and about the design for the chines for *Dancing Chicken* (there are probably some out there who saw this weeks ago, but I didn't). First, here's that shot of a section of one of the arches for the cockpit cover. The next two are the drawing I made a while ago of *Dancing Chicken* and that same drawing with one of the sections of the arches laid over it.



At the time I stated that it shouldn't take much modification for the arch to become the forward chine for *Dancing Chicken*. In fact, it will take none, that is, none in terms of the basic design. All it will need is the same thing

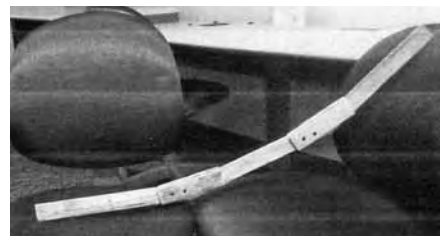
I may do for some of the arches near the center of the cockpit cover in order to reinforce them. That would merely entail cutting pieces to fit in between the pieces that have the fasteners in them now and adding fasteners to those as well (and, of course, also glue).

The thoughts I was thinking about scarf joints, etc., were unnecessary because those were for a design (and a very nifty one, too, I might add) where those scarfed pieces were attached directly to the side of the boat. For *Dancing Chicken*, the chines will be part of an independent frame on which the bottom and sides will be attached after the frame is built. I know I mentioned that earlier but at that time I thought I would have to modify the design to make it work. Now I think, "What for? This construct works. It keeps its shape and stays together and I figure that after I put the reinforcing pieces in (which are also so that the sides will fit onto the chines smoothly) it will be even more likely to do that." Of course, then I can't help but think I must be overlooking something very major which I will notice later at which point I will exclaim, "Oh, drat!" or imprecatory equivalent.

I still have options regarding the length. I may settle for each section being about 3'3" long. That would give me a total length of 6'6" which is the same as my first boat, *Talitha Cumi* (I could also add a third section later if I want more length). Another advantage to that length is that I get to keep the space in the cockpit that I would save by not trying to make each section 4' long).

I also may include some fore and aft camber which the original design didn't have, probably because I thought at the time that it would be prohibitively difficult to do that. Now, however, especially with this design, well, she may get that fore and aft camber after all.

This next photo may look very familiar, as well it might. However, this is not designated as a section of the arches for the cockpit cover. This is, or such is the plan, the first section of the starboard chine for *Dancing Chicken* (with the small additional reinforcing pieces and shaping as described).



So to paraphrase George Gipp's (www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/win-one-for-the-gipper.html) famous phrase:

This one's for the Chicken!

She is hatching!

Will she splash in the spring?

We shall see.



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Exactly what the heck is wrong with me, anyway? I sometimes ask myself this as I futz away on another project. Why can't I just leave well enough alone? Why must I always be doing something and almost never the something I'm supposed to be doing? Like making a spring pole lathe.

Sorry, I thought I saw a shiny thing over there so I went to go check it out, but on the way I saw the anthill that the big red ants made and they were dragging a dragonfly into their hole, and there was a persimmon on the ground next to the hill which made me think of the trees so I went to go check them, and I saw the shave horse there under one and there was an oar in it, so I started shaving a bit until I got thirsty. I came inside and saw this sitting on the chair, and I remembered where I last saw the bypass pruners to get that one branch on the persimmon tree, and while I'm there, may as well prune a bit.

Oh yeah, boats. A'course, there's the orange one. She's being chipped away at, I assure you, to reassure myself. Hey! She's flipped over onto the trailer and getting ready to be finished, for real! Excitement abounds.

There're also boats we already have and use which need using and maintaining. I mean, we don't DO any of the maintaining really, but more using. Still, putting off the fixing and prepping at home generally means we get to do it in the field or on the water and with inadequate tools and resources to boot. See, we DO maintain our boats. Often in public with rocks. When they get bad enough we just rebuild them.

Now where was I? Oh yeah, the persimmon tree. See, I don't know about the rest of y'all, but I don't exactly live in Nautical Harbor. In fact, I live closer to the Sierra Nevada mountains than anything, really. Tons of water around, mind in the form of rivers and impounded rivers. Haha. Impounded rivers sounds funny.

"Can I help you?"

"Yes, I'm here to get my river out of impoundment."

"Do you have a ticket or case number?" "655321"

"Oh, my. 300,000 acre feet and parked in front of a hydrant."

We have spent a fair number of years puttering around in all these odd little back-water spots in these foolish contraptions I keep building. Which, I'm not sure if the boats keep us heading to the water or the heading to the water keeps us in the boats. I think it's the boats because I have a real problem. Seriously, I simply cannot stop building boats.

Well, allow me to clarify. I ain't building yachts nor anything two or three humans can't move around by hand but we still call them boats, usually, and we use the heck out of most of them. Some get used mildly then go somewhere else. And now, don't get me wrong. I ain't one of those. I like to use as much as build. Shoot, I will take drifting around in a boat over just about any other activity. Not even actively having fun or doing anything other than bobbing around, not sinking.

Don't you ever wonder? I mean, I ain't the dummy I play on teevee and I can even work the math that explains why boats don't sink, but it still amazes me. This dang thing weighs more than me but it floats. And I can get in it and it will STILL FLOAT! This amazes me even more because I do NOT float. Well, I do float, sort of. I float like a rock.

The sensation of floating, to me, is only enhanced by the fact I built the boat. I know

What's Wrong With Me?

By Robert Jacobs



every stick or panel or fastener. I know, because I made every part of this crazy contraption that weighs more than me, weighs more than us and, usually, doesn't sink. Well, OK. I don't make all the fasteners (plenty of trunnels, lashings and rivets do get made). Really, I didn't "make" anything, at all but merely transformed the state of some matter. Still.

Maybe that is part of it. Maybe I like to imagine I created something really useful and, at the same time, magical. Oh yes, conjuring boats is magic. Really. "Normal" people view wooden boats as some sort of voodoo, even if they are "only" plywood boats. What kind of wizards can just up and build themselves a boat?

Magic. Double magic if one can simply conjure a boat from thin air with no written plans. But shoot, y'all, I can make other stuff what's magic, too. I ain't drawn to them like I am to boats though and I don't know why. I simply cannot explain why boats call to me so.

As I said, there is no hoary nautical tradition in my family nor even any exposure to any nautical doings other than tin skiffs until my 20s. I started with model boats because I'm a model maker. Model boats are neat but I feel no compulsion to build them. It was after I built my first real boat all by myself (an anthropometrically measured skin on frame kayak) that I first felt it. A real and irrational compulsion to build another.

Now I have built them quick and dirty, nice and purty and nine types of hurdy gurdy, but since that first kayak I have had at least one boat a'building ever since. SOF, strip/glass, lapstrake (real wood, not ply yet), stitch and gloop, ply on frame. I have honestly lost count of all the goofy little boats I've built or helped build. It ain't in the hundreds but it sure is some dozens. And I have no intention of stopping. What the heck is wrong with me?

Since I started building the *Frolic*, which I intended to be quick and dirty but which morphed into a hurdy gurdy job early on, I have built two other complete boats. And fixed another one. Yeah. I made a little purple rowing skiff, very quick and dirty, stitch and glue style. How quick and dirty? The weave was filled with high build primer mostly. I also made a West Mersea type duck punt which was a sort of hurdy gurdy ply on frame with taped seams affair.

Hurdy gurdy, by the by, I'm using as a middle ground between rough and polished. It's not quite a string section but it's nicer than just two violins.

Why though? What causes me to want to build? Why, for example, am I building a boat (oOK, two) and planning and gathering

the materials for another? OK, there are three in the queue I'd like to build.

Materials! OK, to be fair, sometimes having materials on hand will force MY hand. I mean, if I suddenly have a few "extra" sheets of decent domestic supply culled from a larger stack just in case, should I just leave them lying about to be damaged? Probably safer to just use them quickly, get them safely into their final form as a goofy little boat before they become something stupid like a shed.

Dimensional or rough cut lumber make me feel that way because it ain't unusual to have them laying around. Well, stacked and stickered around but that doesn't quite roll off the tongue, eh? Something about those panels and the thought of another three board type boat just makes me giddy. I love the simple three board boat type, whether it be pointy or not on either end. Skiffs, sampans, pirogues, punts, garveys, jon boats, dories, whatever. I like those types for the goofy little waters it is my wont to haunt.

Small, small waters and a very shallow boat around here means excellent nature opportunities. Wading birds (egrets, cranes, etc), and migratory waterfowl and a pelican rookery, and bald eagle nests. Little three board boats do these waters best.

It can't be just the ply though, because I can't stop tying together sticks and covering them with sheets either. Man, there ain't much as satisfying as tying a boat together with string and not using any screws or glues.

I don't know. I suppose there are worse problems to have than a compulsion to build things, especially boats. I suppose I can be thankful I'm not addicted to building three masted schooners or full size steam locomotive replicas.

I wonder. Man, what the heck is wrong with me?

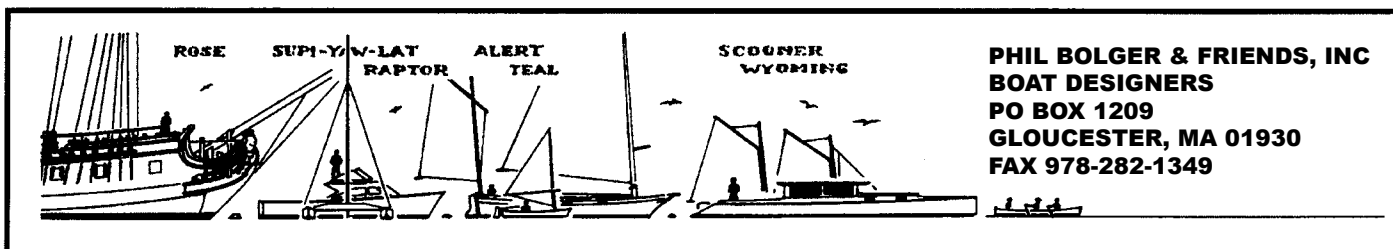
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How could anybody forget Column #508 of February 2017 with my near endless rant on the absurdities so many of the good folks running regional and national fisheries management policies have gotten lost in? That was Installment #18 on “Messing About in Fishing Boats.” Yes, go ahead, reach for that issue of *MAIB* and immerse yourself if you like cruel and unusual (self) punishment. Fortunately this will be a shorter piece, just not sweet.

Actually, this has been serious business all along since well before Installment #1. Not only does it affect where the fish on your plate comes from, how it was caught, whether its harvest is indeed sustainable or whether it is what it is claimed to be. It also, in many places be it holes in the wall or ports, old growth working waterfronts so often near where fishing drew first commercial interests, can also offer us non professional boaters a spot to tie up, a moderately priced repair yard, plausible boat storage, reasonably knowledgeable folks with whom to talk and enjoy boats. To keep all that going, having a viable sustainably managed small business based fishing fleet can be the difference between plausible working waterfront economics and the death spiral into unaffordable gentrification that may not even allow us to paint our own boat at that suddenly pricey yard under that new management.

Beyond just plain eating fish produced by this, one of the oldest industrial infrastructures on this continent, none of this is any partisan nonsense, none of yet another mad cycle of spin doctors foaming at the mouth over some scandal of the day or just another lame and sticky sales pitch. The challenge here is whether the ever shrinking working waterfront can indeed sustainably support the sustainable harvest of seafood via sustainable fishing craft and thus support we boaters as well! After all, a truly sustainable fisheries management approach should support fishing and other ocean centric commerce for decades, and indeed centuries, to come. And for that we need what we’d find in Gloucester for almost 400 years, deeper water frontage to take out the catch, to tie up the fleet, for servicing the boats, preferably several boatyards, adequate local expertise, a nautical culture of all stripes which we boaters need as well.

And that is what is so flamboyantly absent from the fisheries management proceedings dictated to America’s Oldest Working Waterfront and so many other fishing ports. As discussed at length last February here in *MAIB*, without showing any interest in hearing the voices out of the boat design, boat building and boat repair industry, the regulatory process has been dominated since 1994 here in New England, and since 1999 nationwide by marine biologists, administrators, legal counselors, NGO ecologists, etc. They seem convinced that actually knowing any of this boat stuff would be at best sec-

Phil Bolger & Friends on Design

Design Column #519 in *MAIB* Messing About in Fishing Boats #19

ondary, if not pretty much irrelevant to their much grander ambitions running this fishing fleet. This conceptual disconnect between boats and the fleet is fiercely insisted upon across now near 25 years of inevitably incoherent policies. And yet they steadfastly continue through this or that presidency.

For context, they were certain that in order to protect the sustainability of the resource we must limit undue growth of the fishing fleet by limiting length, tonnage and horsepower, a seemingly reasonable enough perspective. However, their not knowing enough about boats became a dark liability for the industry, its ports, even the resource. Compressing our counter argument offered in public since March 2003 and discussed in Column #508, we laid out repeatedly that length is not size, with displacement/weight instead a plausible measurement to use. We emphasized that tonnage was an ill definable metric unlike displacement and that few could tell the actual horsepower of an engine installed in a boat by looking at it or studying some label or plate on it.

The point of our argument was that by 2003 it was clear that their metrics had proven to force stagnation in the evolution of fishing boats, preventing more efficient, less carbon intensive, more resource sensitive boat geometries and fishing practices. For the first time in this industry’s history on this continent, the fleet has indeed stopped evolving! It could not adapt to a 15-year 360% fuel cost inflation rate between 1999 and 2014! It could not build wherewithal to manage the draconian cuts in the amounts of fish deemed available. It simply cannot match challenges it had been through one way or the other across many cycles the previous 370 years. So, by 2017/2018 this fleet has lost a quarter century of natural evolution, of growth in expertise, practices, reflexes, stout substance, to cope with, say, climate change, oil price manipulations, bad regulations and also the abuses from within.

So we spent some 15 years arguing that only displacement is the best indicator of a boat’s size and thus its lethality to the resource, with horsepower sort of tolerable but uncertain, only constrained in its unpredictability by keeping the engine reliable. Alas, here in New England it took 20 years for tonnage to be eliminated in 2014. But length continues to hold captive those regulators’ minds as a presumably deeply meaningful indicator of the fishing power a craft could exert.

As discussed at some length in #18, and to be (again) highly compressed here, the consequences have been far reaching, damaging to people, businesses, infrastructure, communities, the seafood resource and the ecology at large. These simple and yet still so ill considered regulations triggered a cascading sequence of ugly consequences along all of the US saltwater shorelines, actually affecting inland fishing industries, their craft and thus their communities as well. And incidentally, Canada is doing no better on this:

a. Technical and thus operational stagnation in the evolution of boat types and fishing methods.

b. Destruction of small businesses afloat and ashore by preventing their agile adaptation to new challenges, such as by choosing better boat types and advanced catch technology.

c. With the fleet and support businesses under duress, irretrievably losing more of our already limited working waterfront.

d. Continuous damaging of the resource due to now a quarter century of this dictated fleet and catch method stagnation, with the backwards fleet and under evolved catch methods constituting a severe long term liability against the sustainability of regional fish stocks.

e. Forcing even more import of seafood from uncertain and often unsustainable sources overseas now past the 92% mark of all seafood in the US, if we can be sure what it actually is.

Well, it could not be this bad with all the different fish in the oceans? The reach of these myopic regulatory dictates goes much further than many folks may be aware of. Instead of hearsay, polemics, speculations, studying the *Federal Register*, the record of federal and regional rule making, the law (!) is instructive. Here are just a few basics on which species, which fisheries and which fleets have been affected.

First key date is March 1, 1994. Affected by these boat regs are Northeast Multi-Species List, the so called Ground-Fish-Complex consisting of American plaice, Atlantic cod, Atlantic halibut, Atlantic pollock, Atlantic wolffish, haddock, ocean pout, redfish, white hake, window pane flounder, winter flounder, witch flounder, yellowtail flounder, and as so called whiting also silver hake, red hake, offshore hake.

By February 19, 1999, “to achieve regulatory consistency on vessel permitting for Fisheries Management Plans which have limited access permits issued by the Northeast Region of the NMFS,” more species and with those indeed massive additional fleets, as in thousands of boats, summer flounder, scup, Black Sea bass, Atlantic mackerel, squid, butterfish, Atlantic surf clam, ocean quahog, Atlantic sea scallop and the economically ever so important American lobster.

So, this is not just some local skirmish. Affected are many thousands of boats and businesses plus their indispensable shore-

side support infrastructure and this just here in the Northeast. If you eat fresh wild caught fish vs something frozen, this directly affects you one way or another. Only missing out of this fishmonger display are swordfish, tuna, shark, but not much more you could catch here in New England.

Yeah, so what, some may push back, we've got fish farms. Well, so far many fish farm models still need more fish to be fed to fish than is being produced in the end, meaning over exploitation of cheap "trash fish" (or something) to be processed into fish meal at an astonishingly accumulating carbon cost at every step. Only vegetarian farmed fish may offer advantage, both still depend on how and where their feed is generated and where their waste goes and what is actually in their waste in terms of growth and health related pharmaceuticals and pesticide residue from the veggie feed production, etc.

Surely the industry leaders must have been robustly pushing back on this then? Judging by the comments to these regulations in the *Federal Register*, none of these leaders recognized what these 1994 rules could indeed mean. Like the federal and regional regulators, they had no "gear heads" in their meetings either, nobody to point to the bad metrics in those regs. In fact, to this day they either remain foggy on this or are incredulous that what they agreed to could be this disastrous. Either way, they are co responsible for the consequences.

And remember, that in November 2016 their representatives once more joined the New England Fisheries Management Council's (NEFMC) unanimous opinion that this regional body of fishing industry governance would (yet again) not be interested in at least having a first in depth presentation on the role of boats in any efforts of managing the fleet. Yes, this does not just read embarrassingly stupid, it is.

Two or three recent fishing leader sponsored films, such as *The Sacred Cod* of 2016 and *Dead in the Water* of 2017, presented with great pathos, suggest no reconsiderations to perhaps learn from past analytic failures to no longer unquestioningly submit to this "regime of the catastrophically stupid." These films' tenor is that scientists don't know what they are doing, ecologists are out to get fishers and bureaucrats are just that, a message akin to a worn out eight track cartridge. No self inflicted failures to ever be discussed.

It had indeed occurred to us a few years into this fruitless effort that their irritation with our insistence to push for a modern resilient fleet across now 15 years could have fostered this sclerosis only to worsen. My showing how to build a 39-footer to US Navy specifications sure did not ring any bells with them, just amounted to more aggravation with this widow successfully demonstrating, if need be, hands on opportunities to innovate. Likely the mindset at work touched upon in the previous *MAIB* issue in Column #518 on making fishing vessels safer. Grotesque ethical darkness in full public view. No hesitation strutting this.

Early on already we speculated whether they'd move away, change their name, start selling used Albanian sports coupes in northwest Nebraska, or something. Nah, still here.

So where were we then to prevent all this? After over three years of courtship and accepting Phil's offer to join him in matrimony, January of 1994 I moved aboard Phil's 48' *Resolution*, solidly frozen in at Cape Ann

Marina in her winter berth, coal stove and all, in the middle of Phil's seventh winter aboard. By April we got married amongst family and friends. And we sure would have never thought such ignorant regulations could be formulated of all places here in Gloucester, America's Oldest Seaport. In fact, we did not notice the fattening fleet, the absence of advanced shapes and propulsion until the summer of 2002. Certainly nobody had popped through the hatch in 1993 to ask Phil his perspective. However, starting in house that summer of 2002 and in public March 2003 we engaged.

But why bring this up again now early 2018? Why indeed?! Except that 2017 brought even worse news! We knew that NEFMC would, for 2017, have no interest in discussing this issue. Then, fortuitously in terms of my logistics, the national Council of Fisheries Management Councils had their annual meeting here in Gloucester in June of 2017. Eight such councils to manage the nation's fisheries exist per Magnusson-Stevens Act (MSA) of Congress. So the system's leaders from New England to Guam were all assembled and I took two days to listen. However, no public input allowed (!) to discuss on the record with folks who came some 8,000 miles these hard realities damaging the port they looked out the window at.

The most important takeaway though was the remarkable fact, in full public view, that none of the eight councils had any interest in advanced fishing boats either! Each and every single council's official list of priorities for the coming years was devoid of any line item that sustainable boats and thus 21st century fleets might have relevance to their tasks, in fact duties, as mandated by Congress under MSA.

Who would have been prepared for that? A national leadership consensus of the 50% business model pioneered by NEFMC since 1994? As tragic a conceptual and thus institutional failure as this constitutes, there is a certain aesthetic to all this nuttiness, boats having nothing to do with the fishing fleet, now that oddly strikes a chord. The dogged determination to mutually persuade each other that boats and fleets are essentially of no serious interest to these national fishing fleet managers. Laughing or weeping are the options.

So it will be of no surprise that for 2018 NEFMC will, for the 15th year in a row, have no resources, no time, no staff to discuss the topic, so I was advised patiently again in November 2016 and late summer of 2017. And, just to reassure the reader, no indications either by late 2017/early 2018 that NEFMC or the HQ of the National Marine Fisheries Service at NOAA in Silver Spring, Maryland, would have any working group of boat designers, builders, repairers, etc on their payroll.

This is akin to claiming authority over the national air traffic system without any clear understanding whether we dealing with a hand started seven cylinder air cooled radial engine six seater biplane in bamboo, plywood and canvas construction, a 787 or a Curtiss Commando, as we are exploring some next generation hub and spoke plan, new navigations aids, advanced airport traffic efficiency schemes. For 2018, so the eight Council executives agree, their quest for an Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management Model will continued to be valiantly and arduous pursued under strictest of scientific oversight, however, without even the earli-

est conceptual considerations of the vital relevance of a matching fishing fleet. Is Episode #18 then perhaps the last installment? What's left to do without any new advanced boats even to be discussed?

Good question. Beyond marveling in the Aesthetic of the Absurd in full bloom on indeed a grand scale here, the work needs to get done anyway. Who would let the Muggles run things further into the ground?

Gloucester and the Sea

From Wikipedia

The town was an important shipbuilding center and the first schooner was reputedly built there in 1713. The community developed into an important fishing port, largely due to its proximity to Georges Bank and other fishing banks off the east coast of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Gloucester's most famous (and nationally recognized) seafood business was founded in 1849 as John Pew & Sons. It became Gorton-Pew Fisheries in 1906 and in 1957 changed its name to Gorton's of Gloucester.

The iconic image of the Gorton's Fisherman, and the products he represents, are known throughout the country and beyond. Besides catching and processing seafood, Gloucester is also a center for research on marine life and conservation. Ocean Alliance is headquartered in the city.

In the late 19th century Gloucester saw an influx of Portuguese and Italian immigrants seeking work in the town's flourishing fishing industry and a better life in America. Some present day fishermen of Gloucester are descendants of these early immigrants. The strong Portuguese and Italian influence is evident in the many festivals celebrated throughout the year. During the Catholic celebration, St Peter's Fiesta, relatives of fishermen past and present carry oars representing many of the fishing vessels which call Gloucester their home. St Peter is the patron saint of the fisherman.

Gloucester remains an active fishing port and in 2013 ranked 21st in the United States with respect to fish landings. In that year 62 million pounds of fish were caught bringing in an estimated \$42 million.



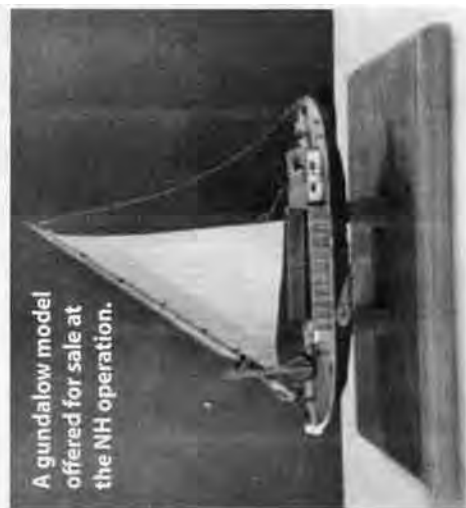


Guy Hancock: "I visited Portsmouth, NH and got to learn about and sail on a gundalow. This type of vessel was a barge built to carry wood and bulk materials back and forth from the port to communities 25 miles inland. The tidal flow on the two rivers leading to the harbor is the second strongest in the US, second only to Columbia R. The gundalows were built by farmers and carpenters. They used sweeps to steer and move in and out of the current, and originally had square sails. As bridges were built across the rivers, square sails changed to lateen rigs. The boom was set on a short mast and was counterweighted at the foot. This made for quick dropping and raising of the sail. The typical crew was "a man and a boy." The *Piscataqua* is a reproduction built from plans of the last gundalow built in the area. It has bulkheads and a diesel to meet CG regulations. The gundalows phased out of business as the railroads developed. The *Piscataqua* does several 2 hour excursions daily.

The *Albacore* is an experimental sub commissioned from 1953-1973, and built in Portsmouth. It sits on land now, open for visitors. The sub was built to test new underwater shapes because the advent of nuclear power meant optimizing for full time underwater operation. Several different tail configurations were tested, and different propellers including counter-rotating twins on a single shaft. Other items tested were battery designs and noise reduction on the running gear. The sub also had the first LORAN installed."



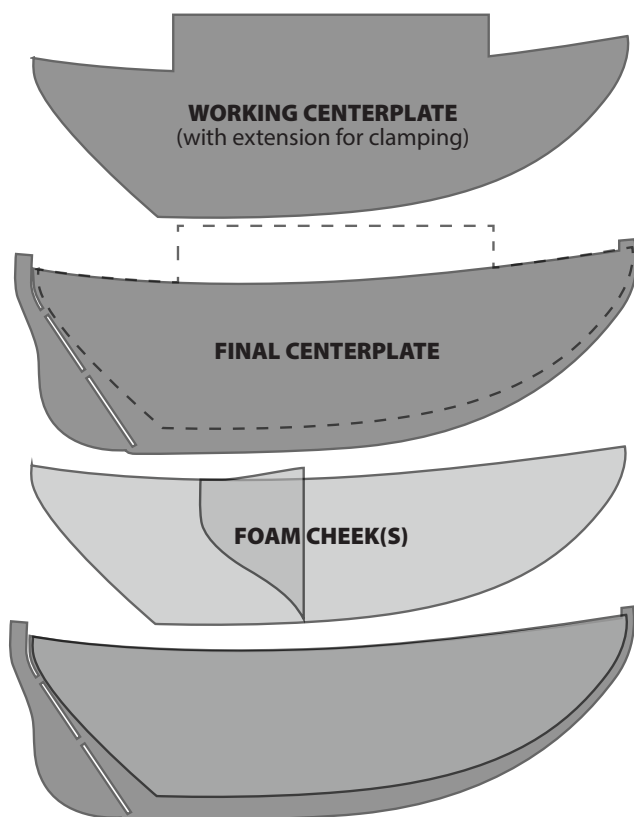
A gundalow model offered for sale at the NH operation.



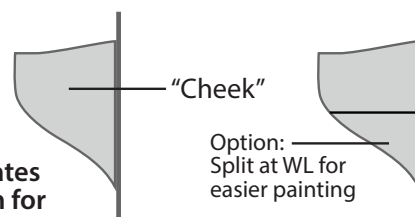
Guy experienced vessels old and newer in New England, recently.



Foam as a Ship Model Material



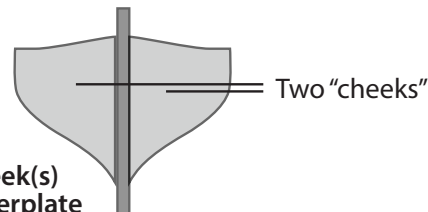
1.
Make
Centerplates
(half width for
half-model)



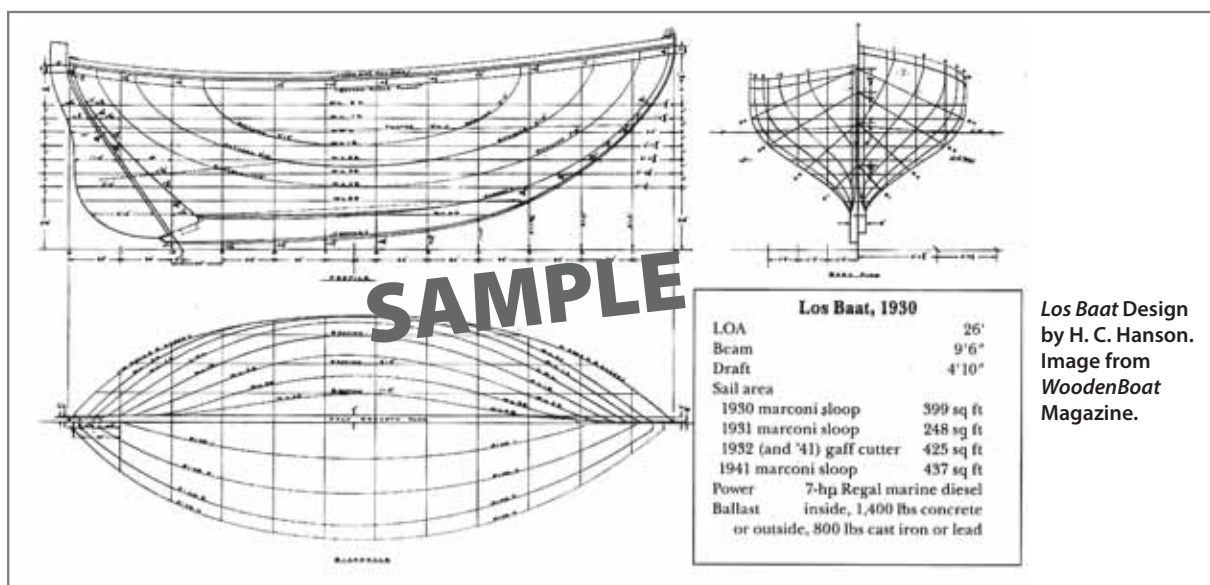
Why Foam?

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2.
Make foam Cheek(s)



3.
Mount Cheek(s)
to Final Centerplate



- Create centerplate as required, to form stem, keel and aft structure.
- Create working centerplate to hold foam cheek(s) clamped, while shaping.
- Using any of a variety of "structural - sign," foams, roughly shape cheek(s) and mount to working plate with dowels, soluble adhesive or tape.
- Mount cheek for half-models or cheeks permanently.
- FINISHING: Coat/Spray/Seal with water-based barrier as you would with a soft wood. Thinned Rust-Oleum® wood filler or Durham's® Water Putty are soft and sand well. Prime and finish with your favorites.

That's all there is to it. – Irwin Schuster 8/2017

Insulation, Sign & Architectural Foams

- Dow® (etc.) Styrofoam® insulation board
Soft, cheap, available.
- High Density Polyurethane (3 densities)
Scrap at sign shops. Machinable. **Best!**
- Expanded Polystyrene.
Coarser texture. Okay for large work.

These products will glue with PVA (White glue). **Test alternatives!**

How many toolboxes do you have on your boat? I carried two fishing tackle boxes for the tools and a socket set in its carry case. One tackle box was for electrical work while the second was for mechanical work. The socket set carried both standard and metric sockets. Both boxes were standard “plastic” boxes for fishing equipment. Their little top drawers were great for screws, bolts and other small stuff while the main part held the wrenches, pliers, screw drivers and the rest. The electrical box held the fuses, crimping tool, electrical tape and the like. The nice part about this arrangement was I did not have to dig through a large toolbox for the tool and all three stored out of the way on the boat. A medium sized box of tools for a given problem is far easier to move about in a boat than a large one.

I have the same type of arrangement in my hearse. A small toolbox with the tools most used and some larger tool boxes with the big wrenches, screw drivers, power tools and the like. I also have a socket set in the vehicle as well as various sized hitch balls. The Ford has a single tackle box with the tools needed for a quick repair to get it to the shop.

Thinking about tools, how many (and what size) extensions do you have for your socket set? There are times when you need to get to a nut or bolt in a less than abundant space around an engine. My large socket collection in the hearse has a variety of extensions as well as $\frac{1}{4}$ ”, $\frac{3}{8}$ ” and $\frac{1}{2}$ ” sockets, ratchet wrenches and extensions (one gathers a lot of tools in 50 some years of owning a variety of boats and vehicles).

For engine/boat repair at the float I had access to a lot more tools than I had on the boat and thus could create what was needed to get to the problem nut or bolt. One time I used three extensions and a universal joint to get to the bolt that needed to be extracted. It was that or pull the engine. Tools should be carried on the boat that might be needed for a quick/emergency repair. Leave the rest on shore. This approach removes a lot of weight from the boat and who wants to rebuild the engine rocking on the water?



Low speed maneuverability is a problem on most powerboats. The slower the boat goes, the less water flow passes the rudder. For most slow boats the solution is a bigger rudder or some means to turn the propeller to change the water flow (outboard, I/O or variations thereof). Another solution is the Kitchen Rudder which changes the direction of the water flow at the propeller. The propeller, drive shaft and all the rest is fixed, the device simply redirects the water flow and changes the direction the boat is traveling immediately after the propeller rather than a foot or so away as with most inboard engines. It even has the ability to move the boat in reverse without a reverse in the gearbox. The Kitchen Rudder is an interesting approach to steering a vessel at low speed that has been bypassed by technology. However, it does work and can be used today in some circumstances.

Pop rivets are a very nice way to connect two pieces of metal. As most people know, there are two kinds, “closed” and “open.” One is sort of open and will leak water while the other provides a sealed connection. I know of one person who was constructing a light aluminum boat and ran out of the “closed” type and used the “open” kind. The boat leaked at every one of the “open” rivets and he had to drill out all of them and reset with the proper kind. Of course, there are also steel rivets, which are not suitable in the marine environment.

Another use for rivets is to secure metal to wood or wood to metal where a mechanical fastening is needed. I have used this method with satisfactory results a number of times on both my boat and around the house. In my situations

I needed to secure a piece of metal to wood with little room for a nut/bolt attachment and the wood was too thin for an effective screw. I drilled out the metal and wood for the diameter of the pop rivet being used and secured the two pieces. The pop rivet expanded inside the hole and the compression on the wood held everything in place. The approach might not work where heavy sheer forces can be involved, but otherwise is an option to consider.

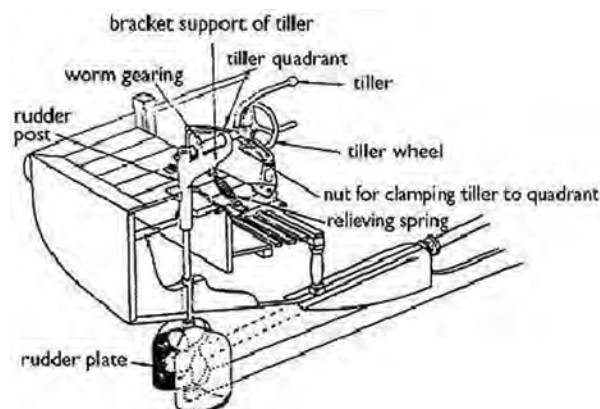
You want to build a boat? The first question is what kind of boat and the second question is what kind of material. If you decide on wood for the hull and structural components, then there are the questions as to type of wood, style of construction (clinker, lap, ply, etc) and how to put it together (screws, nails, bolts, glue, wood saturation, etc). Another option is the ferro concrete hull and various materials for the deck, cabin, etc. Then we have fiberglass (solid or some kind of core) with the requirements of resins, hardeners, molds, etc. There is also fiberglass over wood to protect the hull and provide a more “solid” outside surface. Then you have aluminum and steel as building material. Although not used any more, to my knowledge, the first non wooden boat was made of iron.

The above list probably misses your favorite boat building material but each of the methods requires special tools and skills. All the boats I have built have been of plywood for the hull and deck. This is mainly because I developed an adverse reaction to fiberglass resin and hardener when I was doing boat repair on fiberglass hulls. A rash on the skin is no fun and working with fiberglass requires gloves and a face mask, which are also no fun in the hot Florida sun. When working with a grinder on any material that creates dust, a dust mask and eye protection is a must. One person I know developed lung cancer from breathing teak (and other hardwood) dust while working with the wood. A fellow sailor ended up with emergency eye cleaning from fiberglass dust in his eyes as he was working upside down on a rudder under the boat with no eye protective goggles.

Behold the Kitchen Rudder

From Wikipedia

The Kitchen rudder is the familiar name for “Kitchen’s Patent Reversing Rudders,” a combination rudder and directional propulsion delivery system for relatively slow speed displacement boats which was invented in the early 20th century by John G.A. Kitchen of Lancashire, England. It turns the rudder into a directional thruster, and allows the engine to maintain constant revolutions and direction of drive shaft rotation while altering thrust by use of a control which directs thrust forward or aft. Only the rudder pivots; the propeller itself is on a fixed shaft and does not.



The rudder consists of a pair of slightly conical (usually but not always, designs vary), semi cones mounted on a pivot either side of the propeller with the long axis of the cone running fore and aft when the helm is midships. They are pivoted about a vertical axis such that the cone may close off the propeller thrust aft of the propeller, directing the thrust forwards and thus creating motion astern.

In addition to the “jaws” of the cone being controlled the direction of thrust is also controlled by rudder direction. In this way, it is unlike the azimuth thrusters used on many medium and large vessels, or the outboard motors or stern drives used by some small boats, since these all use the directed thrust to avoid the need of a rudder altogether. While not strictly Kitchen rudder technology, the “clamshell” thrust reverser on some aircraft jet engines is an aeronautical derivative of the device.

The operation of the Kitchen rudder is performed with the propeller engaged, even when the boat is stationary. The rudder is controlled by a small wheel on the tiller.

Neutral: The engine is brought up to speed with the drive to the propeller engaged and with the Kitchen Rudder in the “neutral” position. This is a position where an equal quantity of thrust is aimed forward and aft. Each vessel will have a unique “neutral” position.

Moving ahead: The Kitchen gear is opened up to direct an increasing proportion of thrust aft. As the balance changes the vessel will move ahead.

Moving astern: The Kitchen gear is closed to direct an increasing proportion of thrust forward. As the balance changes the vessel will move astern.

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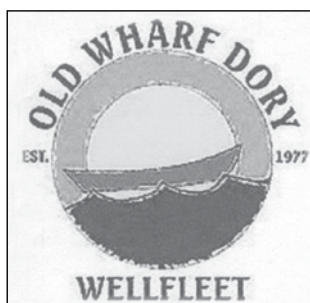
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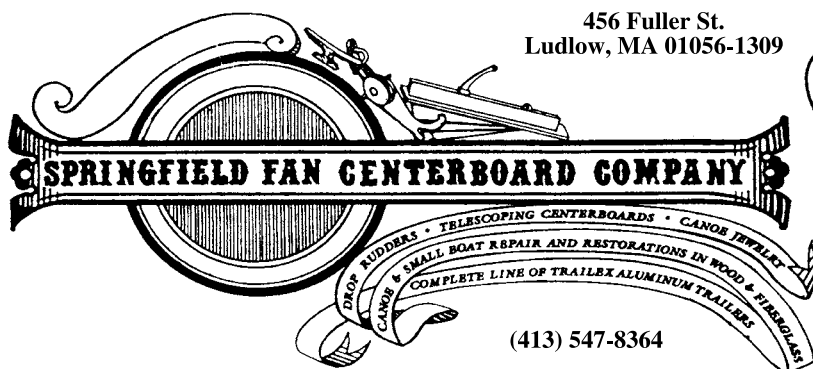
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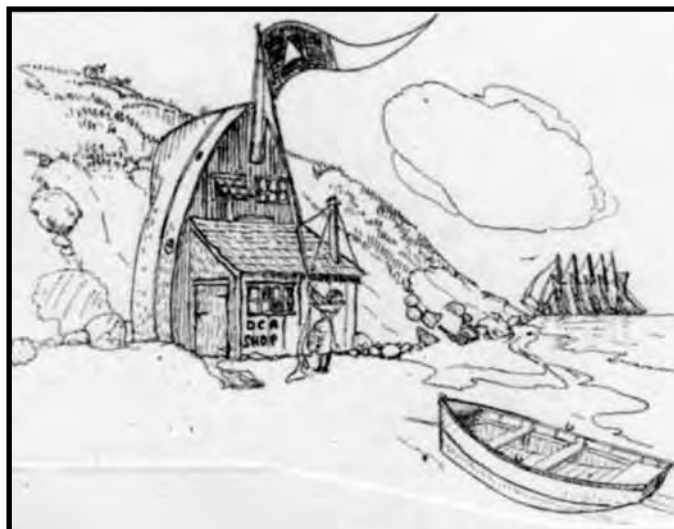
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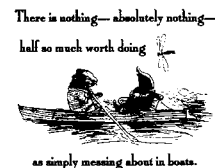


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'LIKE FISHING FROM AN ARMCHAIR' by Joyce Marcel, *Vermont Business People*: As we glide ever so quickly past the water lilies, the only sound I hear is the gentle splashing of the oars. But the oars of this particular boat — a 14-foot Vermont Fishing Dory, with a body and style based on the legendary Adirondack guideboat — are, in keeping with the boat's heritage, remarkably long. The length of the oars gives the rower extra power and speed. The boat has an elliptical bottom board...not flat, not round, just right. It is 14 feet long, with a low center of gravity that makes it remarkably stable. It weighs only 80 pounds, but it could hold 700 pounds in case we shot a bear. I was being rowed by Ian Martin, 34, who, along with his brother Justin Martin, 36, made this boat. The pair, almost inseparable, have become the second generation of Vermonters to own the Adirondack Guideboat Company in North Ferrisburgh. "Ian and I have been together since high school, always doing the same exact thing," Justin said. "No one believes we can work together this long without killing one another. But pretty much, there aren't too many people you can trust. But family you can trust most of the time." For many people, the Adirondack guideboat is a religion — or maybe it's more like a cult. The boats combine the best features of a canoe and a rowboat (without either of their defects). They were originally created in the middle of the 19th century for hunting and transport in the Adirondacks (hence the name). The makers wanted a boat that was stable in the water, moved quickly and could hold supplies as well as game. The original guideboats were made of local pine, spruce and cedar and about 8,000 tiny tacks and screws."

(For the rest of this, and additional articles on our boats, go to www.adirondack-guide-boat.com. There you will find articles from Cigar Afficionado, Prop Talk, Woodshop News, The Robb Report and we don't know what else. Color photos too....happy new year, folks. And you too, Bob.)